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Tuesday, 21 October 2008, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Zhang Yesui	(China)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Grauls
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Kafando
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Jurica
	France	Mr. Ripert
	Indonesia	Mr. Natalegawa
	Italy	Mr. Terzi di Sant'Agata
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Dabbashi
	Panama	Mr. Suescum
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Sawers
	United States of America	Ms. DiCarlo
	Viet Nam	Mr. Le Luong Minh

Agenda

Post-conflict peacebuilding

Report of the Peacebuilding Commission (S/2008/417)

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08-56187 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Post-conflict peacebuilding

Report of the Peacebuilding Commission (S/2008/417)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Bangladesh, El Salvador, Guinea-Bissau, the Netherlands, Norway and Sierra Leone, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, the representatives of the aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to His Excellency Mr. Yukio Takasu, Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission and Permanent Representative of Japan.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Takasu to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2008/417, which contains the report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its second session.

I now give the floor to Mr. Yukio Takasu, Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission and Permanent Representative of Japan.

Mr. Takasu: It is my distinct honour and pleasure to present to the Council the annual report on the work of the Peacebuilding Commission (S/2008/417). The report covers the wide range of activities undertaken by the Commission during its previous session. Thanks to the dedicated efforts of members, the Commission made steady progress and produced concrete results in many areas of its work.

Maintaining peace and security is a prerequisite for successful post-conflict peacebuilding efforts. It is equally true that durable peace and a sustainable State will never be achieved without good governance, the rule of law, respect for human rights and economic recovery and development. The Peacebuilding Commission is a unique United Nations organ that addresses all those challenges in an integrated and coherent manner. It brings together all stakeholders. It formulates an integrated strategy and monitors its implementation. It garners support and mobilizes resources. The Commission is grateful to the Council for the political guidance and substantial support that it has received and that is essential in fulfilling such a role. I also believe that the Commission can in turn fulfil a useful role complementary to that of the Council.

First, the four country-specific configurations engaged in intensive work, under the strong leadership of the respective Chairs, to produce tangible results supporting national efforts. Integrated strategies were adopted for Burundi and Siena Leone, and they are now being implemented. The strategy for Guinea-Bissau was recently adopted. A field mission will visit the Central African Republic shortly to prepare for that country's strategy. The notions of national ownership, sustained partnership with the international community, mutual accountability and dialogue — in other words, a cooperative and participatory approach — have come to be the greatest assets and have added value to the Commission.

Secondly, there are many more countries in the world than those now on our agenda that are facing challenges in the post-conflict process. The Peacebuilding Commission may provide invaluable support for efforts to address these challenges by developing effective peacebuilding strategies and

policies. With that purpose in mind, the Organizational Committee conducted in-depth policy discussions on the synergy between peacekeeping and peacebuilding and the role of the private sector. The Working Group on Lessons Learned took up several topics in order to share best practices from past efforts.

Thirdly, a serious effort was made to enhance partnerships at the highest level, in particular with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the African Union and the European Union. Regular consultations with the Presidents of the Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council were established. Many outreach efforts were made by the Chairpersons and the Peacebuilding Support Office to deepen understanding regarding the specific needs of post-conflict countries and the work of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Building upon our achievements to date, I would like to outline four priority areas that need to be focused upon.

First, we must continue to produce tangible results on the ground. We should bring about visible impacts of direct benefit to the people in the countries under consideration. To consolidate peace, it is essential that people actually be able to see and experience signs of the arrival of peace after a ceasefire, in the form of positive changes in their livelihoods. We need to elicit the support of all stakeholders and to mobilize resources, not only from traditional partners but also by bringing in new and non-traditional partners.

In that context, the call made by the Security Council in the recent presidential statement on Guinea-Bissau (S/PRST/2008/37) for support for the implementation of its integrated strategy was very useful and appreciated. Such political support by the Council is essential if the Peacebuilding Commission is to fulfil its mandate. I hope that the Council will continue to express its strong support for the work of the Commission and the implementation of the integrated strategies.

It is crucial that the United Nations presence on the ground have the appropriate mandate and capacity to support the work of the Commission and the engagement of the national Governments concerned. The United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone is a good example. We would encourage the Council to consider that need when it reviews the mandates of relevant missions and offices.

Secondly, strategic and policy discussion must be deepened. The strategy for international peacebuilding efforts is still in its early stages of development. We must make every effort to develop policies on how to fill the gap between peacekeeping and peacebuilding and also the gap between peacebuilding and development. There is a need to promote policy guidance for effective peacebuilding efforts through discussions in the Commission. Topics such as youth employment, the role of the private sector, justice and peace and the subregional dimension may be considered. Post-conflict early recovery will be a major issue of interest, both for the Council and for the Commission in the coming months. The Commission will cooperate closely with the Secretariat in preparing the report of the Secretary-General on that subject, and early examination by the Commission will provide useful inputs to the forthcoming review in the Council.

In anticipation of the inclusion of additional countries on the agenda, the issue of the entry point for the Peacebuilding Commission is also important. Peacekeeping and peacebuilding are not mutually exclusive. We should avoid duplication of efforts, of course, but some overlap may be necessary and justified in certain cases to ensure a seamless transition. We request the Council to continue to consult closely with the Commission on the referral process.

Thirdly, partnership must be strengthened. Building upon efforts to establish strong partnerships with United Nations funds and programmes, the World Bank, the IMF, regional development banks and major bilateral players, we must continue those efforts in order to make certain that the commitment of those partners is translated into specific cooperation on the ground. We will also continue to engage actively with civil society organizations.

Fourthly, the coherence of the Peacebuilding Commission's activities must be ensured. We will continue our efforts to ensure that all parts of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture work in a coherent and coordinated manner for the sole purpose of serving people on the ground. As many Member States urged last week in the general debate of the General Assembly, the Commission will continue to

improve the efficiency of its working methods, with a clear sense of added value.

Finally, during the reporting period, the relationship between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission was well established. As Chairperson, I regularly consulted with the Presidents of the Council, and I am very grateful for that courtesy. In addition, the Chairs of the country-specific configurations were regularly invited to the relevant Council meetings. I was personally invited to open Council debates on cooperation with the African Union, security sector reform, women and peace and security, and post-conflict early recovery. Those interactions became an established practice that is beneficial to both organs.

In recent years, the Government of the Central African Republic has worked to re-establish stability throughout the country and to launch a national reconciliation process. In the international community that has engendered the hope that the situation in the Central African Republic will be stabilized in the coming years, as well as renewed trust in the political will of the country's protagonists.

National ownership has already been reflected in the identification of national priorities. We welcome the commitment of the Government to make training a crucial part of its future efforts. The process of political dialogue should be restarted and include all armed groups and political actors, so as to genuinely re-establish peace and stability throughout the whole of the country's territory. The Commission will therefore have to support the Government's efforts, on the one hand, while, on the other, the Government demonstrates true political will in order to together build lasting peace in the Central African Republic.

Finally, I would like to pay tribute to the leadership of Ambassador Takasu, Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission, who has succeeded in breathing the necessary life into the work of the Commission during the second year of its existence. I should also like to express our appreciation for the work of the Peacebuilding Support Office and to thank Ms. Carolyn McAskie for her commitment. I also wish to express our full cooperation to Ms. Jane Holl Lute, the new Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support.

Ms. DiCarlo (United States of America): I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Takasu for his leadership. I would also like to thank the Chairs of the Peacebuilding Commission's country-specific configurations, which have facilitated the Commission's work both in the field and in New York. My delegation also warmly welcomes Assistant Secretary-General Jane Holl Lute and looks forward to working with her on this important issue.

The United States strongly supports the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. No function can, or should, be more central to the work of the United Nations. Today, I would like to make three points.

First, the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, two years ago, was an important but initial response to addressing what former Secretary-General Kofi Annan called the missing middle between peacekeeping and sustainable development. While progress has been slower than we had hoped, the Commission today is delivering on its commitment to the countries on its agenda. It has facilitated the emergence of new donor partners and has spurred greater coordination and frank dialogue on the underlying causes of instability that have so often contributed to tragic relapses into conflict. We believe that the Peacebuilding Commission can ultimately play an important role in United Nations peacebuilding by helping to marshal the necessary resources during the golden hour immediately after the cessation of conflict and, subsequently, by ensuring that peacebuilding is sustainable. Therefore, the working methods of the Peacebuilding Commission need to be strengthened to make it as effective as possible. We look forward to discussing the role of the Peacebuilding Commission in early recovery as mentioned by the Secretary-General in his report.

My second point is that peacebuilding must be a central pillar of United Nations reform and a priority throughout the United Nations system. Every organ of the United Nations and every major fund and programme should take into account the crosscutting nature of peacebuilding. Peacebuilding must begin from the earliest days of humanitarian intervention, with capacity-building efforts to restore the functions of the State, the rule of law and respect for human rights. It must also be accompanied by support for the restoration of infrastructure and the rapid delivery of a peace dividend that includes work for the young and the demobilized. The Peacebuilding Commission should harness the competencies of the Security Council and the General Assembly and, through its

convening authority, seek to integrate the workings of peacekeeping, development and humanitarian intervention. It should also encourage United Nations funds and programmes, traditional and non-traditional donors, non-governmental organizations and academia to better support efforts in the field through inclusive dialogue, innovative best practices, improved coordination and, of course, enhanced financing and capacity-building.

As my final point, I should like to say that we should also keep in mind the need to address other early-recovery issues in parallel. Those include bolstering the role of special representatives of the Secretary-General with the needed authority and resources to coordinate the response of United Nations agencies and the broader international response. We will also need to revamp the Peacebuilding Fund to provide greater flexibility in selecting implementing partners and faster disbursement to immediate post-conflict situations.

The work we are all doing in the Peacebuilding Commission is critical. Building lasting and sustainable peace requires long-term focus. That is exactly why we are all here, to ensure that we keep that focus and improve our capabilities. With the right mandate, the right leadership and the right resources, the United Nations has a unique and indispensable role in helping post-conflict societies to find their footing on the path to peace and prosperity. We must resolve to develop the kind of peacebuilding capacities required to fulfil our mandate, to advance international peace and security and to improve the prospects for success in post-conflict situations.

Mr. Terzi di Sant'Agata (Italy): As I take the floor, allow me to thank Ambassador Takasu, Permanent Representative of Japan and Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission, for his report.

Today's debate provides us a useful opportunity to take stock of the first two years of the activities of the Peacebuilding Commission and of its relationship with the Security Council. The Peacebuilding Commission was established in 2005 to fill the gap between peacekeeping and post-conflict rehabilitation by bringing coherence to efforts aimed at the recovery of countries emerging from conflict. That is why it was decided that the Peacebuilding Commission should be an advisory body not only of the General Assembly but also of the Security Council.

The Commission started with realistic expectations. Only two countries were on its agenda for the first year, so that it could develop effective mechanisms before embarking on larger tasks. We can now safely say that the results have been satisfactory. The countries on the agenda are on a promising road to stabilization, despite some difficulties. Three integrated strategies have been agreed on with the active involvement of the countries concerned, in keeping with the cornerstone principle of national ownership.

The Peacebuilding Commission is one element in a triad. The other two are the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) and the Peacebuilding Fund. The job of the Fund is to fill a crucial gap, namely, the one resulting from the fact that, even when the donor community is quickly mobilized, it can take time to set up effective mechanisms to channel resources into stabilization and recovery projects. We are therefore heartened to see, as telling proof of the commitment of donors, that the Fund has exceeded the target of $250 million set in 2005. We encourage the Secretary-General to continue his work to make the Fund a flexible and effective instrument. We also encourage him to provide the Peacebuilding Support Office with adequate resources as the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission expands. The Peacebuilding Support Office's role cannot be overstated. It provides the Commission with analyses and instruments to develop and implement effective strategies and support for the effective involvement of the United Nations system.

The Security Council has actively participated in examining countries' requests to be placed on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission and has closely followed the Commission's activities over the past two years. We believe that that cooperation can be intensified by identifying links between the Commission's peacebuilding strategies for a country and the Security Council's decisions and analyses regarding peace and security, as well as by better integrating the Commission's activities into the Council's work.

A peacekeeping operation mandate is but the first step towards the stabilization of a country. The scope and nature of the mandate should contemplate the further steps to be taken. Peacekeeping should no longer be conceived as a stop-gap measure to simply monitor a ceasefire or implement a peace agreement. It should be seen as a long-term investment in peace and

the first crucial phase of the international community's involvement.

The Peacebuilding Commission should develop close and effective cooperation with the entire United Nations system, first and foremost with the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. System-wide coherence is therefore a unique opportunity to make the Commission's strategies in the field more effective and to prevent gaps in the transition from peacebuilding to development.

I would like to conclude by focusing on the Peacebuilding Commission's agenda. The countries on the agenda so far are from Africa. While the majority of conflicts do indeed occur there, to be a truly global instrument the Commission also has to look at other regions. It must have a broad range of vision to become the world's most reliable instrument for peacebuilding. Time has shown that we can live up to these challenges.

Mr. Natalegawa (Indonesia): Allow me to first express our appreciation to you, Mr. President, for convening this debate on the report of the Peacebuilding Commission and to thank the Commission for its second annual report. We would also like to thank Ambassador Yukio Takasu of Japan for his remarks and to commend the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, the present and previous Chairs of the four country configurations and the Working Group on Lessons Learned.

In its presidential statement S/PRST/2008/16 of 20 May 2008, the Security Council expressed its intention to support the peacebuilding efforts in countries emerging from conflict. We believe that peacebuilding support should be provided to those countries at an early stage, especially when the Council creates or renews the mandates of United Nations-led missions through its decisions and resolutions. That very important step could ensure that peacebuilding support is incorporated in a United Nations mission.

We hold the view that the more the notion of peacebuilding support is meaningfully reflected in the mandates of United Nations peacekeeping and other United Nations political missions, the greater is the chance for realizing the priority areas of peace consolidation as stipulated in the integrated peacebuilding strategies. The key to that exercise is close consultations with the receiving country, potential contributors and the Secretariat. The Security Council is also an appropriate forum for providing guidance on the political and security aspects of peacebuilding activities.

Yet the challenge is how those aspects could be effectively linked with the social, economic and development components of peacebuilding efforts, as envisioned by other United Nations bodies. My delegation therefore believes that the Commission can play a very important role as a nexus for linking the political and security components taken up at the Council with the social, humanitarian and economic aspects that the Economic and Social Council focuses on.

At the strategic level, that approach can be developed with the Commission's active and substantive engagement with other principal United Nations organs, Bretton Woods institutions and other relevant agencies. At the operational level, it can be derived through the regular interface of the country configurations with the pertinent United Nations funds, programmes and country teams. That will lead to better coherence and integration of the cause of and results in the United Nations system.

The issue of coordination remains critical, given the existence of so many institutions and resources. By giving good consideration to how coordination within the United Nations and between it and other actors might take place, we will more effectively utilize those resources and have a more efficient process. The United Nations itself should continue to play a leading role in the field in coordinating international efforts in post-conflict situations.

For its part, the Security Council, as part of the United Nations system, could play an important role in enhancing adequate coordination and division of labour at the level of United Nations organs. It can ensure the operational relevance of Peacebuilding Commission advice, which remains essential for countries on the agenda of both organs and in resolving the security-related aspects of peacebuilding. The finest synergy between the two organs would serve to clarify and define a seamless transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding.

Close cooperation between the Peacebuilding Commission and the Security Council should also continue to be nurtured. That is crucial because it is the Council that draws up referral letters to the Commission. That collaboration also forms a basis for

the Commission to identify peace challenges, risks and priorities in a particular post-conflict country. Further collaboration between the Commission and the Council should also be encouraged in the information-sharing activities that relate to peacebuilding.

The information that the Peacebuilding Commission gathers and that the Security Council receives must be mutually complementary and merged to form a basis for sound decisions with regard to peacebuilding activities. To narrow any gap, there should be more synergy and substantial communication between the Council and the Commission.

Equally essential is the synergy between the Peacebuilding Commission, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. Of particular importance is bridging peacebuilding and political stability, socio-economic recovery and humanitarian issues, which would lay the foundation for longer-term development activities. In that regard, as stipulated in the Council's presidential statement S/PRST/2007/42 of 6 November 2007, the Peacebuilding Commission should continue to serve as a forum for coordination between the United Nations system and regional and subregional organizations in the area of post-conflict situations.

My delegation recognizes that the Peacebuilding Commission is steadily leaving its infancy. Its work, however, is not particularly well known to wider audiences, including the private sector, non-governmental organizations and other civil society groups, whose role in and contribution to peacebuilding efforts have been recognized by the Council. As the co-creator of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Security Council should therefore help in boosting public awareness and visibility of the Commission's work by featuring its processes and outcomes in its various engagements.

Finally, allow me to reiterate that Indonesia, for its part, will continue to support and contribute to the efforts for an integrated and coherent approach in peacebuilding based on the dimensions of security, democracy and development, and to raise awareness of those matters nationally and regionally.

Mr. Dolgov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): First of all, we would like to thank the Permanent Representative of Japan, Ambassador Takasu, for his efforts in the institutional consolidation of the role of the Peacebuilding Commission in the United Nations system and beyond.

The experience of the Commission's second year proves that assistance by the United Nations and other partners to countries emerging from conflict has met significant complexities in the areas of national capacity-building in recipient countries and the coordination and synergy of peacebuilding efforts by the United Nations and other participants in the peacebuilding process.

Our assessment of the second year of the Commission's work is positive. Significant progress has been achieved in Burundi, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau. Work has started on identifying the priorities for peacebuilding in the Central African Republic. We believe that one of the great benefits of the Peacebuilding Commission is the establishment of direct dialogue with national Governments, thus ensuring their leading roles in and responsibility for the peacebuilding process. We believe that the main goal of the Peacebuilding Commission at the present stage is to achieve feasible progress at the country level through coordinated implementation of peacebuilding strategies and monitoring and tracking mechanisms under the leadership of the Governments concerned.

We especially note the progress in arranging regular dialogue between the Commission and the Security Council on issues that are on the agenda of the two bodies. We believe that the practice of inviting the Chairs of the country-specific configurations to Council meetings has proved its practical value. In the future, we would like to consider the possibility of holding those meetings in an open format, in order to ensure an interactive dialogue on peacebuilding issues in those countries.

We also believe it is important to ensure an intensive exchange of information in the form of regular meetings between the Chairperson of the Commission and the President of the Security Council and cooperative complementarity between the two organs in drafting the documents of both bodies.

We should also continue the dialogue on the issue of adding new candidates to the Commission's agenda, taking into account the real needs of a specific country for international post-conflict assistance, the progress of the Commission in countries under its consideration — with the understanding that the Commission is not an

additional source of funding — and, above all, a coordination and consultation mechanism. Moreover, we believe that it would be appropriate, over the course of the next year, to begin to discuss criteria, including timelines, for removing countries from the Commission's agenda.

Of course, strengthening the organic relations between the Peacebuilding Commission and the Security Council should continue in parallel with the development of a dialogue among the Commission, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, in addition to other United Nations bodies, programmes and funds, the donor community and regional organizations. The Commission should pay greater attention to those issues.

We are of the opinion that during the Commission's third year it will have to strengthen its coordinating role in those areas that require greater attention from the international community by harmonizing its activities with existing assistance mechanisms, primarily within the United Nations system.

In many respects, that will depend on the strengthening of the position of the Peacebuilding Support Office within the Secretariat. In that respect, we place our hopes in the new head of the Office, Ms. Jane Holl Lute. We welcome her presence here in the Security Council today.

We expect that the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Support Office will take an active part in the preparation of the Secretary-General's report on early recovery and post-conflict peacebuilding, as follows from the Security Council meeting in May under the presidency of the United Kingdom. The Commission's expertise in matters of increasing coordination of peacebuilding activities, building the civilian capacities of recipient States and partners, including the United Nations, and early recovery financing mechanisms should all be taken into account in the report.

During the coming year, the Commission will also have to focus on the analysis of lessons learned in the process of peacebuilding. In that connection, we believe it important to improve the efficiency of the Working Group on Lessons Learned. Policy and strategic discussions within the Organizational Committee can also be of practical value. However, they should not undermine the mandate of the Working Group or lead to the development of any doctrinal norms in the area of post-conflict peacebuilding and rehabilitation.

The Commission should also concentrate on the mobilization of additional donor resources, in particular by integrating international financial institutions, regional organizations, private sector funds and trust funds into its work. We attach great importance to the Peacebuilding Fund as a catalyst for emergency financing that can facilitate the mobilization of more sustainable aid mechanisms. We believe the time is ripe to review its terms of reference, and in that connection we expect concrete proposals from the Secretariat in order to begin consideration of the issue in the General Assembly.

Sir John Sawers (United Kingdom): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important and very welcome debate today. I say "welcome," because peacebuilding remains at the heart of the Security Council's work. The thematic debate we held here in May on post-conflict peacebuilding, which colleagues have referred to, pointed to the shortcomings in stabilization and recovery efforts that exist here, particularly in the immediate aftermath of conflict.

That debate back in May also highlighted the critical role of the Peacebuilding Commission, particularly for sustaining international engagement to ensure that countries do not lapse back into conflict. The year ahead offers an opportunity for us to address collectively the critical gaps that still hamper our peacebuilding efforts.

Let me first commend the work of the Peacebuilding Commission over the past year. I would particularly like to single out the leadership offered by our colleague, Ambassador Takasu of Japan, Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission, and also the chairing roles of our colleagues from Belgium, Brazil, El Salvador, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. I should like to thank the Peacebuilding Support Office for its role, and we warmly welcome the appointment of Jane Holl Lute as the new Assistant Secretary-General.

The annual report describes the Peacebuilding Commission's achievements, and also the challenges we still face. We have heard in this Council over the past year briefings on drug trafficking, elections, security sector and justice reform, transitional justice and land reform. To help a country out of conflict and

into sustained stability, all those issues frequently have to be addressed. As Ambassador Takasu said, the Peacebuilding Commission has to ensure that it is making a real difference on the ground.

I look forward to the Peacebuilding Commission's continued briefing on the situations in the four countries on its agenda and its advice on what action the Council, as well as the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, should consider taking. To achieve that, I hope that the practice of holding monthly meetings between the Commission Chair and Security Council presidencies can be sustained to ensure that our respective work is aligned.

It is important that the interaction between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission not become purely mechanistic. We need to be alive to new threats to peacebuilding and address them quickly. That includes being alert to the impact that the oil and food price crisis, and now the financial crisis can have on peacebuilding.

We should also be more creative at soliciting the Peacebuilding Commission's advice and support. To date, the Security Council has been largely reactive. It has referred to the Commission only those countries that have requested to be on the Commission's agenda, but the Security Council and the Commission itself could take more of the initiative and explore — with the agreement of the country concerned — whether the Commission could rapidly marshal resources to help address a new threat to recovery in a country that is not on the Commission's formal agenda.

Finally, we look forward to the Peacebuilding Commission feeding in its views to inform the Secretary-General's report that was requested at the 20 May debate on how the United Nations can improve its support for early recovery. The report provides an opportunity for the United Nations system to tackle the gaps of leadership, deployable civilian capacity and rapidly available funding that currently impede the international community's work on early recovery. The test will be whether, over time, we can reduce from the present level of 30 per cent the proportion of conflicts that break out again within five years of a peace agreement.

But it does not end there. At the recent debate on mediation and the settlement of disputes that was chaired by President Compaore of Burkina Faso, we noted that peace agreements have fallen apart because of the lack of an implementation plan and because we do not have the right linkages between mediation processes and the critical recovery and peacebuilding phase. As the reports commissioned from the various Security Council debates are taken forward, it is imperative that we build coherence across the conflict spectrum so that effective peace agreements are forged, implemented and sustained.

Mr. Le Luong Minh (Viet Nam): Mr. President, I thank you for convening this important debate. I congratulate and welcome new Assistant Secretary-General and head of the Peacebuilding Support Office, Ms. Jane Holl Lute, and assure her of my delegation's full cooperation. I thank the Chairperson of the Peacebuilding Commission, Ambassador Yukio Takasu of Japan, for his presence and his introduction of the annual report of the Commission.

The 2005 World Summit emphasized the need for a coordinated, coherent and integrated approach to post-conflict peacebuilding and reconciliation with a view to achieving lasting peace in the world. The new United Nations peacebuilding architecture of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Fund and the Peacebuilding Support Office has been operationalized as an institutional mechanism to help address the special needs of countries emerging from conflict towards sustained economic recovery and reconstruction.

We welcome the efforts undertaken by the Peacebuilding Commission in implementing its mandates and core functions stipulated in General Assembly resolution 60/180 and Security Council resolution 1645 (2005), especially in such areas as enhancing interaction with United Nations agencies, regional organizations and international financial institutions; strengthening public awareness and outreach activities; providing strategy and policy guidance on peacebuilding; establishing monitoring and tracking mechanisms for the Integrated Peacebuilding Strategies; and organizing field missions to countries under review.

As reported by the Secretary-General, the Peacebuilding Fund has made laudable headway in providing assistance to countries in the early stages of post-conflict stabilization and in mobilizing more sustainable aid resources, which is reflected by pledges of over $269 million from 44 donors, as well as the operation of 37 peacebuilding projects in 11 countries.

My delegation notes with satisfaction the tangible results achieved by Sierra Leone and Burundi, the first two countries supported by the Peacebuilding Commission, in the critical areas of preparing local elections, promoting economic growth, rehabilitating infrastructure, youth employment and empowerment, the rule of law and public administration reform. The recent establishment of country-specific configurations for Guinea-Bissau and the Central African Republic, as well as the consideration of Côte d'Ivoire's request for placement on the Commission's agenda, can be also highlighted.

Despite those achievements, my Delegation shares the view that an evolving Peacebuilding Commission will continue to face a wide array of challenges. Protracted conflicts, the worsening global economic imbalances, the food and energy crisis, the shortage of natural resources, frequent disasters and widespread epidemics have exerted negative impacts on international collective efforts towards durable peace and sustainable development. The Peacebuilding Commission has the difficult task of improving its working methods and provisional rules of procedure, rationalizing its institutional relationship with other United Nations bodies and non-United Nations entities and with the Commission's configurations and formulating a clear consensus on the concepts and priorities of peacebuilding.

On another note, the Peacebuilding Fund has not yet developed its full potential owing to lack of substantial progress in resolving such strategic and managerial issues as the criteria for selecting beneficiary countries, timeframes for drafting and approving projects, the financial and institutional absorptive capability of local Governments, the eligibility of countries for various emergency window funding and the Fund's mobilizing force. Looking forward to the planned 2010 review process of the overall work of the Peacebuilding Commission, we hope that valuable lessons, practices and synergies will be further developed, thus helping not only to prevent the concerned countries from relapsing into conflict, but also to reinforce the early-warning capacity to anticipate potential conflicts and to engage the international community in addressing them.

As the Peacebuilding Commission enters its third year of operation, much remains to be done to help the Commission achieve more concrete results and truly become one of the key international instruments in the coordination of peacebuilding activities. Besides identifying appropriate relationships with the organs and bodies of the United Nations system, the Commission should further strengthen its interaction with the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council in joint efforts towards better coordination, complementarity and division of labour.

Enhanced interaction among various stakeholders is of vital importance. The broad experience of the United Nations system in conflict prevention, mediation, peacekeeping, humanitarian and election assistance, reconstruction and sustainable development must be fully exploited in conjunction with diverse inputs from local Governments, the Bretton Woods institutions, regional organizations and non-governmental organizations so as to maximize impact on the ground and avert the possible overlapping and duplication of efforts.

The Commission should strengthen its role by improving the integrated peacebuilding strategies and formulating efficient tracking and monitoring mechanisms with a view to fully reflecting the socio-economic reconstruction and development priorities of recipient countries, the comparative advantages and practical commitments of international donors and avoiding unnecessary burdens on national Governments.

We recognize that the Commission may become involved with various activities under different post-conflict contexts, and that a comprehensive and country-specific approach to peacebuilding is therefore essential. My delegation believes that further improvements in the development agenda, especially in poverty reduction, education and training, rural and agricultural rehabilitation, private sector reform and capacity-building, will help address the root causes of conflict, nurture socio-economic recovery and create a framework for lasting peace and sustained reconstruction. The Commission should also promote national ownership and participation in all stages of its work.

In the final analysis, the overarching goal of peacebuilding is to enable the countries emerging from conflict to build up autonomous capacity and domestic resources towards self-sustained peace, security and development, conditions in which the local people are both the primary force and the biggest beneficiaries.

The supplementary role of international expertise and assistance should be implemented with due respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and bearing in mind the specificities and interests of the countries under consideration.

Mr. Ripert (France) (*spoke in French*): In my turn, I would like to thank you, Sir, for having convened this debate on peacebuilding, a subject we are addressing increasingly within the Council. I also wish to welcome amongst us the Ambassador of Japan, Mr. Takasu, who ably and with determination presides over the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, as well as the Ambassadors of Belgium, Brazil, El Salvador, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden for their work on the Commission in its various configurations and for their untiring efforts to establish the value-added of the Commission within the United Nations system.

I would also like to welcome the role of the Peacebuilding Support Office and thank the Secretary-General for his support to that office and, of course, Ms. Carolyn McAskie, who laid the first stones of the foundation, and Ms. Holl Lute, who has recently taken up her appointment, and we wish her every success. Allow me also to inform her that she can count on the full support of France and the European Union.

I also have the honour to take the floor on behalf of the European Union. The issue of post-conflict stabilization is at the heart of the thinking and priorities of the European Union, arising from the 2005 Summit and the broader objectives that have been pursued since then, in particular the request by the Secretary-General to provide a more organized, effective and rapid solution to the challenges of post-conflict, post-crisis situations at the request of the Council.

During its second year of work, the Peacebuilding Commission has shown promising progress. The international community has increased its focus on the countries on the Commission's agenda. For the first two countries on its agenda, Burundi and Sierra Leone, the implementation of peacebuilding strategies is currently based on a clear programme of work for future months. On the ground, coordination has been stepped up. Various national political actors, including civil society, private partners as well as various donors, are speaking with each other and are attempting to implement a common road map.

In that context, we feel it is important to increase the visibility of the Commission and its ability to train and to influence. It is astounding in that sense that the countries that would actually benefit by participating with the Commission are still reticent to do so. We need more efforts at communication, particularly among regional organizations. We might also plan to hold some meetings of the Peacebuilding Commission in places other than New York.

When we speak of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund, we must not forget that the problem is not only one of financial resources. The Peacebuilding Commission is not called upon to become a new window for humanitarian or development aid. All efforts and resources of the system must be mobilized, and I am also thinking here of the resources and efforts of the various diasporas.

It is true that, in a number of cases, the key is to extend the circle of States and organizations that support the efforts of the countries on the Commission's agenda. The Central African Republic is a particularly good example of that. It gives the Commission the possibility to further develop its mechanisms so as to ensure that there is adequate mobilization on the part of the international community for a country that has always suffered from relative indifference.

The European Union would like to make a few suggestions for the work of the Commission in the coming year. First, we should encourage the efforts deployed by the Peacebuilding Support Office aimed at strengthening its own capacity to act in support of the work of the Commission. Then, the Commission must improve its working methods in order to be more effective and more strategic, particularly with regard to the future inclusion of new countries on its agenda. Some tools were developed last year. Today the Commission needs to convene meetings that are better prepared but fewer in number and we must not hesitate to call upon the coordination mechanisms of the countries most involved, such as the Peacebuilding Contact Group in the case of Guinea-Bissau, for example. We must also work on the entry points for the Commission's involvement and for the progressive reduction and termination of its involvement. The work of the Commission should be integrated into the Security Council's strategy at as early a stage as possible. Similarly, the Commission should encourage development actors to operate within a political and

security stabilization strategy based on the overall effort to strengthen the coherence of the Organization overall, through the well-known system-wide coherence programme.

I would like to stress the concept of the earliest possible intervention by the Commission, which was mentioned by the Commission's Chairman, the Permanent Representative of Japan, and was seconded by Italy. That approach is vital for us. Of course, we are not yet able to speak about preventing crises, but everyone knows that by dealing with emergence from crisis and post-conflict management we improve a country's ability not to fall back into a crisis. It is clear to us that, in the long term, an ideal arrangement is that which all institutions of the United Nations intervene together, including, indeed — since we are here in the Security Council — when a peacekeeping mission is deployed. That is when we are in a position to properly define the military component and the civilian component of peacekeeping, the indispensable mobilization of national energies and the coherence of all national and regional actors. It is under those conditions that we will also be able to address the problems that come up in the Security Council when we deal with persistent post-conflict situations, of which we have several examples on the Council's agenda. So if get an earlier start, we will be able to shorten the time spent and be more effective across the board. I would even suggest an idea that might seem strange, which is that we deploy a peacebuilding mission before we actually deploy a peacekeeping force, if that is necessary to properly frame the Council's overall intervention effort.

The European Union fully supports the activities of the Peacebuilding Commission, and it shares the priorities that Ambassador Takasu has just proposed to us. The European Commission is actively engaged in all the countries on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission, where the European Union is one of the main donors, if not the leading donor, in terms of humanitarian aid, budget aid and development aid. The European Union also participates in the formulation of peacebuilding strategies. Let us also not forget that the European Union can also support the implementation of the political and security aspects of those strategies, including through the instruments of the European Security and Defence Policy, as is currently the case with the European Union mission in support of security sector reform in Guinea-Bissau.

In conclusion, I would like to say that, like the European Union, the international financial institutions have begun to adapt their instruments. That is also the case for the regional and subregional actors, in particular for the African Union. The United Nations system is showing that it can be more committed and more willing to align itself with strategies defined by the Peacebuilding Commission, and the European Union invites all its bodies to redouble their efforts to ensure such coherence.

Mr. Kafando (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): I should like at the outset to convey my gratitude to the Chinese delegation for having taken the welcome initiative of organizing a Security Council debate on the important topic of the Peacebuilding Commission, just a few days after the General Assembly held a debate on the subject. My delegation listened with a great deal of interest to the statement of Ambassador Takasu, Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission, and we thank him for the very useful information he provided to the Security Council.

The establishment two years ago of the Peacebuilding Commission was undoubtedly an expression of the international community's solidarity with States emerging from conflict. In general, such States face various challenges — economic, political and social, as well as security-related — which they cannot overcome without sustained international support.

That is why after the inclusion on the Peacebuilding Commission's agenda of Burundi, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau, we are gratified by the recent inclusion of the Central African Republic, followed by the setting up of a country-specific configuration for that country which is being guided so effectively by my neighbour at this table, Ambassador Grauls, who himself recognizes that we are at an important stage in efforts to mobilize the international community to rehabilitate that country. We also hope that Côte d'Ivoire's request for inclusion on the Peacebuilding Commission's agenda will soon be granted. That will probably have to wait until the end of the electoral process.

Rightly considered a body possessing the functions of both strengthening peace and preventing the resumption of hostilities in post-conflict situations, the Peacebuilding Commission has already been able to accompany a number of States through a phase of

political and security normalization, the restoration of State authority and economic renewal — in short, the laying of solid foundations for sustainable development.

We thus wish to congratulate the Peacebuilding Commission and its country configurations, the Peacebuilding Fund and the Peacebuilding Support Office on their significant achievements.

The present debate is a timely one. It enables us to take stock of achievements and remaining challenges and to join all the actors in seeking the best ways to enable the Commission to better discharge its mission. We encourage the Commission to continue on-site visits, which have shown themselves to be irreplaceable tools to get a good feel for the realities and to engage in direct exchanges with local actors and their partners.

We welcome the contacts and other informal interactions with other United Nations bodies. This cooperation should continue within the framework of a clearly understood partnership and a harmonization of actions that will ensure that the United Nations bodies avoid duplication while abiding by their respective mandates.

The participation of international organizations and civil society in the work of the Commission is also praiseworthy and should continue within the framework of a pooling of efforts to develop integrated strategies.

Basing ourselves on the principle that the main task of the Peacebuilding Commission is to facilitate the institutional link between peacekeeping, post-conflict operations and the international network for assistance and the mobilization of donors, my delegation would like to make the following comments.

First, the Peacebuilding Commission must step up its efforts to mobilize potential partners possessing the necessary resources to assist States in their rehabilitation processes, because, quite clearly, even though significant progress has been achieved, a great deal of potential remains untapped.

Secondly, as an intergovernmental body, the Peacebuilding Commission should play a mainly political role, one of coordinating the actions of all stakeholders in order to avoid duplication, maintain constructive dialogue with all national players, promote in all circumstances national ownership of the process, make recommendations and suggest integrated peacebuilding strategies.

Thirdly, as an advisory body, the Peacebuilding Commission should not in our view aspire to formulate projects or to take final decisions instead of the Peacebuilding Fund, which is better equipped to do so. We encourage the Commission and its partners to continue their efforts for better mobilization of national expertise, particularly in drawing up projects.

Fourthly, we believe that the Peacebuilding Commission's contribution to reconstruction and institutional capacity-building will be effective only if, in its approach, the Commission focus on cooperation with regional and subregional organizations, which, given their familiarity with the field, are in a position to play a significant role in the political dialogue with concerned States and in the mobilization of efforts at a regional and subregional level. Here, I should like to underscore the major role played by the Economic Community of West African States in Guinea-Bissau and Sierra Leone, as well as the active participation on a bilateral basis of some of its members, in the rehabilitation of these two countries.

The peacebuilding stage is a delicate phase in the post-conflict transition process. On this road towards a restored peace, all dimensions should be equally addressed. We thus recognize that quick-impact projects, if well-implemented, can prove most effective in stabilizing the socio-economic situation, mobilizing political will and re-establishing trust and laying the foundations of rapid rehabilitation.

It remains necessary, however, that all main sectors be rapidly covered and enjoy international aid. This will prevent the feeling that the international community gives pride of place to such sectors of governance, elections and strengthening of the judiciary over such vital fields as energy or basic social services.

Activity on strengthening the rule of law is certainly important in promoting the participation of partners and in laying down the framework for appropriate strategy and behaviour of stakeholders. However, one should not forget that building the basis for lasting peace and development remains the final objective.

It is important that the message of the international community be well understood. This will contribute to reinforcing the confidence of national actors and to promoting effective national ownership of the process.

Mr. Suescum (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to first of all thank the Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission, Ambassador Yokio Takasu, for his briefing. I would also like to thank each of the Vice-Chairs of the Commission for their commendable leadership.

Likewise, we would like to recognize the work done by Ms. Carolyn McAskie as Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support and we welcome the appointment of Ms. Jane Holl Lute.

The activities undertaken by the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission during its second session represent significant progress in the fulfilment of the tasks entrusted to us by the Heads of State and Government at the 2005 World Summit. The expansion of the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission to include four countries clearly highlights the credibility that this body has gained in the international community. This has been achieved by developing flexible, coordinated, coherent and integrated responses to the challenges of peacebuilding as shown by the cases of Burundi, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau.

In the same way, this trust has been strengthened thanks to the participation of civil society, the Bretton Woods institutions, the European Community and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. This participation has also had a positive impact on the operational criteria for the work of the Commission.

Additionally, the field missions have shown the commitment of the Commission to the countries on its agendas and have also inspired greater coordination with national political actors, partners and donors. Notwithstanding this success, the Commission still faces a number of challenges if it is to have a genuine and sustainable impact in the field.

It is important that the Commission take into account its capacities and the lessons learned, that it furthermore define adequate criteria in order to ensure that the countries on its agenda participate as actors in the process. They should own the process and be able to benefit as much as possible from the work of the Commission.

This requires a communications and dissemination strategy in order to make known what the Commission does, as well as its achievements. Likewise, the Commission should redefine its points of focus and working methods by establishing, for each case, specific indicators for the monitoring and follow-up of the integrated strategies.

We should also increase the participation of the private sector as well as that of regional and subregional organizations.

Panama believes that sustainable peace depends on the interactive triangular relationship between security, development and human rights. In this context, it is important to improve the overall planning process of the Peacebuilding Support Office, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs, in order to better define the missions that are authorized by the Security Council.

For its part, the Council, together with the Commission and the other organs and bodies of the United Nations, should create mechanisms for preventing duplication and which ensure that there is complementarity of effort in the countries that are being dealt with through its respective programmes.

The responsibility to ensure the success of the Commission is above all, the duty of the Organization. Our ongoing and firm commitment to ensure the continuous success of the work of the Peacebuilding Commission should be aimed at improving the impact of this Organization as a whole and, in a tangible way, improve the lives of thousands of people who are returning to their post-conflict communities.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): Allow me to express our gratitude to you, Mr. President, for convening this important debate on the report of the Peacebuilding Commission.

We would also like to thank the Chairperson of the Peacebuilding Commission's Organizational Committee, His Excellency Ambassador Yukio Takasu, representative of Japan, for his sterling work.

We would also like to commend the significant contribution made by the Chairs of the country-specific configurations on Burundi, Sierra Leone, Guinea-

Bissau and the Central African Republic as well as the Chair of the Commission's Working Group on Lessons Learned.

South Africa welcomes the second report of the Peacebuilding Commission and applauds the accomplishments of the Commission during its second session particularly, the important strides made towards implementing its mandate and core functions.

We believe a strong Peacebuilding Commission is crucial for addressing challenges associated with conflict, instability and underdevelopment. A successful Commission is important in preventing post-conflict countries from relapsing into conflict.

Among the successes of the Peacebuilding Commission has been its continued efforts aimed at strengthening its relationship and cooperation with relevant organs and institutions, including the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council.

At the same time, my delegation underlines the importance of strengthened cooperation between the Peacebuilding Commission and relevant regional and subregional organizations. The African Union continues to play its role in the peacebuilding field, including through the African Post-Conflict Reconstruction Policy Framework which places emphasis on addressing the root causes of conflict.

We are indeed pleased that, as reflected in the Peacebuilding Commission report, its Organizational Committee held interactive dialogue with the Chairperson of the African Union Peace and Security Council and received a briefing from former President of Mozambique, Joaquim Chissano during the reporting period. We look forward to further interactions of this nature, as they are crucial for strengthening and promoting cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union.

My delegation also commends the establishment of regular contacts between the Chairperson of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Presidents of the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council on issues relating to the work of the Commission. In that context, we reaffirm our continued support for those relationships to be strengthened.

Now that the United Nations peacebuilding architecture is in place, the challenge is how to consolidate the achievements made thus far. South Africa firmly believes that the Peacebuilding Commission should continue to be driven by Member States. The Organizational Committee of the Commission must continue to be the focal point of all the Commission's activities and decisions, and its central role should be strengthened.

We are pleased to note that the country-specific meetings have made a tremendous contribution to the success of the Commission over the past two years. Through the work of those configurations, the Commission significantly contributed to the promotion and adoption of strategic frameworks for Burundi, Guinea-Bissau and Sierra Leone. The establishment of monitoring and tracking mechanisms to check the progress of the implementation of the framework is also essential to the success of peacebuilding efforts on the ground.

With regard to the country-specific configuration on the Central African Republic, my delegation is confident that, under the leadership of the Permanent Representative of Belgium, the Commission's efforts in that country will yield positive results.

National ownership of the peacebuilding process remains fundamental to assisting post-conflict countries to rebuild their institutions and sustain peace and development. To that end, we commend the Governments of countries on the Commission's agenda for their active role in efforts to rebuild their respective countries.

My delegation welcomes the report's acknowledgement of the importance of official development assistance, trade and investment in post-conflict countries. We hope that the Commission will continue to develop methods for mobilizing international and domestic resources. At the same time, quick-impact projects and the sufficient injection of predictable resources in a country emerging from conflict is crucial to ensuring stability and development on the ground.

In conclusion, as we gradually build up the experience of the Peacebuilding Commission, we need to place stronger emphasis on the nexus between peace and development. In that regard, we support a greater and stronger focus on the development agenda of the countries on the agenda of the Commission. South Africa remains committed to the cause of the Peacebuilding Commission. We will continue to work

with others towards ensuring that post-conflict countries do not relapse into conflict and to maximize the Commission's impact on the ground in full alignment, cooperation and in accordance with the national Government policies and strategies.

Mr. Jurica (Croatia): I thank you, Sir, for organizing this debate to consider the second annual report of the Peacebuilding Commission. Today's deliberations should help us to take stock of the progress made thus far and the challenges we face as we enter the Commission's third year of work.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Chairman of the Organizational Committee, Ambassador Yukio Takasu, for his observations and for his admirable chairmanship of the Commission.

The establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission was, in our opinion, one of the most important results of United Nations reform to date. The peacebuilding concept, as enacted through the Commission, offers the best way for us to effectively implement and consolidate the three main pillars of the United Nations: security, development and the protection of human rights. Only if they are implemented together can sustainable peace and long-lasting stability and prosperity be achieved.

We are equally cognizant that the chances for substantive peace are enhanced by the speedy and coordinated engagement of the United Nations system as a whole following the establishment of a ceasefire on the ground or the signing of a peace agreement. It is therefore imperative that all post-conflict efforts be coordinated and integrated so that they can be utilized to capacity while substantially reducing overlap.

It was for those particular reasons that Croatia supported and greatly values the establishment in 2006 of the Peacebuilding Commission and its subsequent work on country-specific issues. We believe that its second session brought many positive developments that can be built upon in the future, in particular those related to the more focused approach to countries on the Commission's agenda. We hope that this approach will be maintained, in particular with respect to the new countries on the Commission's agenda — Guinea-Bissau and the Central African Republic — whose inclusion we very much welcome. Furthermore, we see the expansion of the Commission's agenda as a clear sign of its growing relevance, vitality and strength within the United Nations peacebuilding architecture.

That having been said, we would like to echo the views expressed by some members around this table on the need to keep in mind that the Commission's evolution should go hand in hand with its flexibility. In our view, enhanced flexibility brings more responsiveness and more agility to the Peacebuilding Commission in addressing post-conflict situations. Similarly, although we value the current interaction between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission, we believe that room still exists for enhancing such cooperation and for making better use of the Commission's input in the Council's deliberations.

My delegation sees benefits in the idea put forward in previous debates with regard to soliciting the advice of the Peacebuilding Commission on country-specific issues placed on the agendas of the Security Council and the Commission. In our opinion, that would be of benefit first and foremost to those countries being debated, and give other interested parties and organizations the opportunity to provide relevant information that would allow the Security Council to adopt more informed decisions.

All the activities that we are talking about today will obviously not be possible without sufficient, timely and flexible funding. As one of the founders of and contributors to the Peacebuilding Fund, Croatia hopes that the Fund will be able to further evolve into a mechanism capable of responding promptly to the Commission's needs.

Finally, we hope that during its third year, the Peacebuilding Commission will continue to build on the previous experience and work done thus far, taking in and applying the lessons learned and strengthening its efficiency, flexibility and dynamism in response to the peacebuilding needs of the countries on its agenda.

Mr. Urbina (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to begin by thanking the Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission, Ambassador Takasu of Japan, for his briefing and the information provided therein.

As we consider the work of the Peacebuilding Commission over the past year, I wish to express our pleasure at the Commission's achievements. The Commission's limited experience does not yet allow us to claim that it has survived the test of the first five years, as the Brahimi report puts it, but the actions

undertaken and their results to date are cause for optimism.

My delegation takes this opportunity to address three very specific points.

First is the importance of further strengthening coordination and coherence among the organs and bodies of the United Nations and of increasing cooperation with international financial institutions, regional development banks and regional and subregional organizations. As I have noted previously, after two years of work the Commission has made progress towards achieving its objectives and taken an important step towards achieving coordination and coherence within the United Nations system in post-conflict situations.

However, it is especially important to develop even closer coordination mechanisms, particularly with special representatives of the Secretary-General in the countries on the Commission's agenda. This would enable us to maximize existing resources and, in particular, to provide the Organization's principal representative in the field with the tools needed to promote the implementation of the agreements that will bring about progress towards resolution of the political issues that underlie all conflicts.

Secondly, it is necessary to overcome the arbitrary distinction between peacekeeping and peacebuilding. My delegation has said that the Security Council, when it decides to create or renew a peacekeeping mission, should include in its mandate all the elements necessary to ensure that the transition from conflict to a post-conflict situation to development takes place in as orderly a way as possible. To that end, we consider that the concept of integrated missions will enable us to appropriately meet the challenges inherent in all conflict and post-conflict situations, both in terms of the sound management of resources and in terms of results-oriented action.

I think it is particularly difficult to pinpoint the moment when a peacekeeping operation becomes an operation with a peacebuilding task. In our view, elements of both are present from the beginning, with one of them predominant depending on progress or deterioration on the ground. We therefore do not think that the concept of graduation is appropriate, applicable or positive in a conflict or post-conflict conflict in moving to the peacebuilding stage. In that regard, we welcome the Council's practice of inviting the Chair of the relevant country configuration to advise the Council on the action that should be taken, on the basis of action taken by the Peacebuilding Commission. It is important that this relationship be strengthened in operational terms to enable the Council to adopt decisions based on analyses that take account of all the elements that are in daily play on the ground.

Finally, my delegation stresses the need, for operational reasons, to distinguish between peacebuilding and development, but without creating any artificial competition between the two. Just as we think it neither practical nor helpful to attempt to distinguish between peacekeeping and peacebuilding, we believe that we should identify criteria by which to define the point at which the efforts of the international community and national efforts have borne sufficient fruit that it is possible to move beyond the exceptionality that gave rise to a given intervention. If we cannot define the point at which a situation ceases to be viewed as an emergency, then we will have interventions that, rather than building peace, will promote a culture of patronage and will weaken good governance and responsibility, sowing the seeds of future conflict.

This gives special responsibility to the donor community. The criteria for allocating development assistance cannot be the same as those for allocating peacebuilding assistance. We understand that this is no easy matter, but the additional effort will be rewarded in the medium term by better allocation of resources and clearly identifiable results. Nor can the same operational rules be applied in every context. As we indicated in speaking of the need to strengthen the role of the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General in terms of coordination and coherence, when it comes to peacebuilding the donor community should permit relatively flexible management in order to achieve the goals that in the medium term will enable us to lay the foundations of sustainable development.

The Peacebuilding Commission offers a creative and flexible response, and that is where its great strength lies. The Security Council should muster similar creativity and flexibility so that, working in a coordinated manner, it will be possible to maximize its use of existing resources and facilitate the speedy achievement of sustainable results in the places where it has decided to intervene, in exercise of its mandate.

Mr. Dabbashi (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): I wish at the outset to thank His Excellency Ambassador Yukio Takasu, Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission, for his briefing on the Commission's work and on his efforts at the helm of the Commission. We also pay tribute to the representatives of Belgium, Brazil, the Netherlands and Norway for their efforts as Chairs of the country-specific configurations.

The Peacebuilding Commission was established to buttress the change in the nature of peacekeeping operations, which in the past had been focused more on military and security issues. But those two elements in themselves are not enough to address all the challenges arising from armed conflict, including political, economic and humanitarian problems. The establishment of the Commission was thus a significant step towards sustainable post-conflict peace.

We want to say how much we appreciate the Commission's efforts, both in the organization of its work and in its interaction with other United Nations bodies and with the African Union, thus ensuring effective working relationships in the discharge of its mandate. We wish also to voice our satisfaction about the Commission's interest in identifying the ways and means of meeting the challenges it faces in discharging its mandate.

We pay tribute to the success of the Burundi configuration. The Government of Burundi has been able to achieve a lasting Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding, through the establishment of a joint monitoring and tracking mechanism. There was also agreement with the Government of Burundi on an annual work plan, focusing on Peacebuilding Fund projects in the areas of security and good governance.

The situation is similar with respect to the implementation of the Commission's programmes in Sierra Leone. Indeed, the Commission and the Government of Sierra Leone have jointly adopted the Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework. Work in that country has been focused on assistance in meeting the commitments set out in the framework of the expansion of the donor base and the launching of new priority activities, with a focus on justice and security. We are confident that the Commission will continue its efforts in the same spirit and with the same effectiveness in the Central African Republic and Guinea-Bissau.

We thank donors for their contributions to the Peacebuilding Support Office, which have enabled it to exceed its targets. That also gives us reason to hope for an increase in the number of donors.

We agree with the comments and recommendations contained in the report with regard to the development of an integrated peacebuilding strategy. We continue to focus on assisting national efforts in the areas of dialogue, national reconciliation, capacity-building, institutional reform, economic revitalization and human rights, including efforts to mobilize resources and rationalize their use. Here, we should stress the importance of international, regional and subregional efforts, as well as joint efforts with main United Nations bodies.

In that connection, we wish to make the following points. First, it is quite clear that, while top priority should be placed on security sector reform, judicial reform and overall institutional reform, we should also focus on improving living conditions, creating jobs and providing medicine and food.

Secondly, all efforts and decisions of the Peacebuilding Commission must be carried out not only in coordination with local authorities, but also with their consent. Thus, all projects should reaffirm the concept of national ownership. The relevant national and local authorities must be convinced that what is being implemented is a result of their own decisions and that international efforts are aimed solely at supporting their decisions, not undermining them.

Thirdly, if the effectiveness of the Commission's work is to be enhanced, its annual programmes should be incorporated into a longer-term plan, such as a three- or five-year plan. We know full well that that is no easy task to accomplish. However, if we are successful, it would strengthen stabilization, build trust among donors and convince them that their assistance is needed.

We are convinced that the Peacebuilding Commission has recognized that it must carry out its mandate of peacebuilding in post-conflict countries within the framework of global sustainable development. Thus, the future of peacebuilding depends on our careful understanding of the nature of all conflicts and on national ownership of all peacebuilding and development efforts supported by the international community. It is quite clear that the success of the Commission's efforts will depend on the

support that it provides to post-conflict countries in the area of sustainable development.

I wish to conclude by commending the results of the visit made to the Central African Republic by the Peacebuilding Commission under the chairmanship of the representative of Belgium. That visit led to an agreement with local authorities concerning priority areas for peacebuilding in the Central African Republic. We hope that the Commission's second visit, which is currently being prepared, will also be successful.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of China.

We welcome the report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its second session (S/2008/417) and thank Ambassador Takasu, Chair of the Commission, for his briefing.

We take a positive view of the achievements of the Peacebuilding Commission over the past year. We also note that the Commission is a new organ created little more than two years ago. Therefore, there is still room for the Commission to improve its internal institution-building, to better coordinate the positions of various parties and to increase its mobilization of financial resources for reconstruction. We expect to see those improvements in its future work.

When the annual report of the Peacebuilding Commission was considered in the General Assembly on 9 October 2008 (see A/63/PV.23), delegations commented extensively on how the work of the Commission could be improved. We hope that the Commission will be able to benefit from those useful suggestions.

As one of the parent organs of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Security Council increased its communications and contacts with the Commission over the past year. On the one hand, the Council often listened to briefings by the relevant facilitators of the Commission when the situations in Burundi, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau were under consideration and provided political support by issuing documents at the close of those meetings. On the other hand, the Peacebuilding Commission has submitted many recommendations to the Security Council based on its active participation in the peacebuilding processes in the countries concerned, thus filling some of the gaps in the work of the Council.

As close cooperation between the Council and Commission is imperative in order to strengthen the peacebuilding processes in Burundi, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau and the Central African Republic, the links between the two bodies must be strengthened, not weakened. We should reflect on how to further enhance the cooperation between them. In that connection, China wishes to make the following points.

First, the Security Council should institutionalize its efforts to enhance its communication with the Peacebuilding Commission. The Council should periodically engage in consultations with the Chairman of the Commission in order to share experiences and compare priorities for the immediate future. The Security Council should continue to invite the relevant facilitators of the Peacebuilding Commission to brief the Council when it considers the situations in countries that are also on the Commission's agenda, such as Burundi, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau and the Central African Republic. The Council may have informal informational meetings with the Commission, as appropriate, in order to further strengthen the links between the two bodies.

Secondly, the Security Council should take into account the recommendations of the Peacebuilding Commission as much as possible. The Commission has submitted many recommendations to the Council regarding the situations in Burundi, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau. The Council should attach importance to those recommendations and take them into account. In the future, the Commission's mission reports to the Security Council should, like the reports of the Secretary-General, inform the consideration of relevant issues in the Council.

Thirdly, the Security Council should work more closely with the Peacebuilding Commission when new countries are to be included on the Commission's agenda. As the situations in some of the countries on the Council's agenda improve, they will gradually embark on the path of peacebuilding and wish to be moved from the Council's agenda to the Commission's agenda. The Council should then work more closely with the Commission and seek its views, as appropriate, regarding the inclusion of new countries on its agenda.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council. I call on the representative of Sierra Leone.

Mr. Minah (Sierra Leone): Let me warmly congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of October and to convey my delegation's sincere appreciation to you for organizing this debate on post-conflict peacebuilding. May I also assure you of my delegation's support for your successful conduct of the work of the Council throughout your tenure. My delegation also wishes to convey its gratitude for the work of Ambassador Takasu and for his comprehensive report.

I would like to pay a special tribute to the former Assistant Secretary-General, Ms. Carolyn McAskie, for her significant contribution to making the Peacebuilding Commission a force for good. Indeed, the Peacebuilding Commission and the Fund undoubtedly required the experience and sterling organizational qualities of Ms. McAskie to survive its formative years. By the same token, let me also congratulate and welcome the current Assistant Secretary-General, Ms. Jane Holl Lute, whose background and exceptional track record make her a worthy successor to take the Peacebuilding Support Office and United Nations peacebuilding endeavours to the next level.

We deeply appreciate this debate because it provides yet another opportunity to take stock of the progress made by the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund in delivering on their mandate to consolidate peace in countries emerging from conflict by addressing critical gaps in their recovery efforts. In this respect, we are constantly confronted with the need to ascertain the extent to which the Commission has been successful in garnering sustained international attention and the necessary strategic commitment to mobilize resources to implement the compacts with countries on the agenda of the Commission.

As one of the pioneer beneficiaries, Sierra Leone has witnessed a significant evolution in United Nations peacebuilding in the very short time the Peacebuilding Commission has been at work. The evolution of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) into the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL) and now into the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL) is evidence of the country's contribution to this endeavour. Similarly, the Peacebuilding Commission's engagement in Sierra Leone has had a positive impact on the Government's peacebuilding efforts. As a Government, we recognize the contribution of the quick-impact projects implemented within the key priority areas for cooperation. The range of bilateral and multilateral interventions targeted at supporting projects aimed at promoting democracy, good governance, justice and security reform, together with youth employment and energy sector initiatives, continues to show promising signs of consolidating peace in Sierra Leone.

Despite these advances in the peacebuilding process in Sierra Leone, the problem of resource unpredictability remains a critical issue. For instance, the Secretary-General's initial allocation in March 2007 of $35 million from the Peacebuilding Fund to Sierra Leone has been completely exhausted. I wish to reiterate our recent appeal to our partners, launched at High-Level Stakeholders Consultation in May, to scale up their assistance. That would be useful to expedite the implementation of the Sierra Leone Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework. The challenge for all of us is to sustain the fragile peace.

Peacebuilding work cannot be successfully implemented without the much-needed resources to advance the process. These human and financial resources are key to building a lasting peace, establishing national reconciliation and combating poverty. In our experience, when the weapons of war go silent, post-conflict societies are more often than not left with the scars of massive devastation and the flight of their limited skilled work force. It is therefore necessary to continue to emphasize the enormous demand for human, technical and financial resources for post-conflict State building.

In this regard, Sierra Leone is encouraged by the recent catalytic support provided by the Secretary-General from the Peace Building Fund to the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea-Bissau to kick-start critical peacebuilding interventions in those countries. That effort clearly underscores the preventive approach Sierra Leone has since been advocating. The dilemma, however, is that, in comparative terms, while hundreds of millions of dollars are dedicated to peacekeeping efforts, the crucial beneficial measure of conflict prevention

remains woefully underfunded. That phenomenon clearly begs for a serious rethinking of the international community's and the United Nations approach to the maintenance of international peace and security. Additional financial resources and technical assistance are key to the effective and meaningful implementation of the Cooperation Framework. Indeed, if we are to accelerate the process of helping countries emerging from conflict get on track for the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, it is logical to provide them with much-needed support in their post-conflict reconstruction efforts.

We fully concur with the Secretary-General's appeal for support for the Peacebuilding Commission in order to establish and operationalize a capacity-building fund and a youth basket fund, to establish a national youth commission and to elaborate a comprehensive national youth policy.

Concerned about the security implications of the scarcity and the rising price of food, His Excellency Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma, President of Sierra Leone, in his address to the sixty-third session of the General Assembly, reiterated his Government's appeal for agriculture to be urgently considered as a priority for collaboration with Sierra Leone. On 25 September, he asserted that Africa must increase food productivity and achieve food self-sufficiency, that massive investment in agriculture was the key to a long-term solution and that Sierra Leone was suitably positioned to benefit from such investment.

For the Peacebuilding Commission's engagement with post-conflict societies to be meaningful, the principles of national ownership, coherence and coordination, particularly in the setting of priorities, should be the guide posts for cooperation between those countries, the United Nations and the international community.

My Government is doing everything within its power to expedite the finalization of the second generation Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. We count on the continued support of the Peacebuilding Commission to provide critical assistance to my Government to develop and prepare a national aid policy and ensure greater coherence and coordination among our international partners in achieving our peacebuilding and national recovery efforts. To this end, I would like to express the sincere gratitude of my delegation to all our bilateral and multilateral partners for their targeted interventions in the implementation of programmes and institutional capacity-building. On behalf of my Government, I wish in particular to extend our profound appreciation to the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands for their unwavering commitment to fostering peace, stability and development in Sierra Leone.

I would be remiss in my duty if I failed to conclude my statement by reiterating the statement of Sierra Leone's Minister for Foreign Affairs during her address to the Security Council on 20 May, in which she stated:

> "Delivering sustainable peace is not only an act of enlightened self-interest, but also a public good for all of mankind and humanity. Experience has proven that conflict and social instability breed poverty, flagrant violations of human rights and human dignity, socio-economic disparity and social and political disintegration. The causes of conflict are like their effects: poverty, low economic growth, ethnic and cultural intolerance, and the mugging of democracy, social justice and human dignity. Wrestling with this vicious cycle of instability and underdevelopment in our present global reality is, therefore, clearly not an act of charity." (S/PV.5895, p. 5)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Guineau-Bissau.

Mr. Cabral (Guineau-Bissau) (*spoke in French*): Allow me to thank you and through you all of your distinguished colleagues for the opportunity that you have afforded my delegation to take part in this debate.

Everyone agrees in their recognition of the creation of the Peacebuilding Commission as one of the major achievements of the 2005 World Summit. The facts are clear and point to both the appropriateness and the timeliness of that long-awaited decision. As indicated a short while ago by our colleagues the representatives of Italy and the Russian Federation, the results have largely been positive. There are many reasons for the positive results we welcome today.

First, for reasons the Security Council is well aware of and which have been widely referred to here today and in the General Assembly a few days ago, it was altogether necessary that we establish the

Peacebuilding Commission. However, we must recognize above all that we have been fortunate to have two Chairpersons whose indisputably effective and devoted efforts have provided unequalled dynamism to this new undertaking in which we are involved. I should like to take this opportunity to once again thank Ambassador Gaspar Martins, the representative of Angola, who was Chair of the Commission in its first year. Above all, I would also like to emphasize how much Ambassador Takasu of Japan has been responsible for promoting the operationalization of such an important process.

I should also like to say that we have had the good fortune to work very closely with the Peacebuilding Support Office under the leadership of the very competent Carolyn McCaskie, who has contributed her experience, dedication and commitment to a cause that we should, and in fact do, support so honourably. On behalf of my delegation, I should like to say how very pleased we are to note how admirably she has been replaced by Ms. Jane Holl Lute. I wish to congratulate her on her appointment and to express how very much we appreciate her experience and personal commitment to the same values. I would like her to know that we are quite prepared to work with her to ensure the success of this very important Commission.

In the briefing by Ambassador Takasu, who is the Chairperson of the Peacebuilding Commission, it has become clear that the Commission is doing excellent work. I say "excellent" work because it is sending a new message and, as the Ambassador of Costa Rica has just said, the Commission is demonstrating greater creativity and flexibility. That is because Chairman Ambassador Takasu is attempting to ensure that the Commission can make a difference — not just to send a message of hope to people who are suffering, like my people, those of Guinea-Bissau, but also to attest to the solidarity that was just referred to by my colleague from Burkina Faso. We are in fact talking about solidarity — international solidarity with people who are suffering, people emerging from conflict, but people who nevertheless believe that they are not facing a hopeless situation and that they can overcome that situation through determination and the support of the international community. That is precisely the support that the Peacebuilding Commission provides. Allow me therefore to say that we truly owe an enormous debt of gratitude to all the Chairs of the various configurations, each of whom is giving his or her best.

In addition, I should also like to pay tribute to the Ambassador of El Salvador, who, as we know, presides over the working group on the lessons that should be learned — lessons that I hope will indeed be learned and remembered in the future. Of course, the Council will also understand that I must also pay very special tribute to Ambassador Viotti, the representative of Brazil, for her excellent work as Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration.

In Guinea-Bissau we have every reason to be pleased with the results we have achieved, which are clear and demonstrate not just the solidarity of the international community but also the fact that we in Guinea-Bissau, my fellow citizens, are indeed able to emerge from the situation. It is not insurmountable. As indicated by the Chairman in his briefing, we recently adopted a comprehensive strategy that was the result of thorough work that was carried out in an inclusive manner, with all actors, all interested persons, everyone with a stake in the life of Guinea-Bissau. That included Government officials, but above all, members of civil society, young people, and women, who make up the driving force of all development, as well as politicians from the various political parties. That has resulted in an inclusive process. The strategic framework has been the culmination of all that work. That should be the approach for the future, which is to say, an approach that is results-oriented and based on inclusive democracy.

I should therefore like to say to the members of the Security Council that the Peacebuilding Commission is a major component of peacebuilding in countries emerging from conflicts. I cannot say enough how satisfied we are with the growing cooperation between the General Assembly and the Security Council in a matter as fundamental as the future of peoples who are suffering, emerging from conflict and determined to establish the conditions for a democracy based on respect for human rights, the acknowledgement of and the pre-eminence of the rule of law and the participation of all men and women in the national affairs of a country.

Before I conclude, I should wish to say that there is a major problem in Guinea-Bissau, namely, drug trafficking. We are determined to combat that scourge with the help of the international community. In a few

days, we will be present at Praia, Cape Verde, to participate in a ministerial conference of the countries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Regional and subregional cooperation is a crucial element, as the Ambassador of Burkina Faso has just said. We in ECOWAS have decided to provide a comprehensive solution to a generalized problem. Allow me to say that we are quite satisfied with the adoption of the strategy, for it will enable us to bring about major reforms in the areas of defence, security and public administration. We will also be able to establish a credible system of justice, which is necessary for the strengthening of the rule of law. Through such a system, we will be able to ensure that those who commit crimes are punished by a well-established judicial system that meets universally recognized standards.

Finally, allow me to say that we agree with the notion of ownership that was referred to just now by the representative of South Africa. Such ownership, as we understand it, is first and foremost a responsibility to be assumed by the country concerned and, secondly, a shared responsibility, because we are all in this surge of solidarity together. We are all moved by the same desire to ensure that the countries concerned will be able to see new democracies born through free and credible elections, such as we plan to hold on 16 November. Therefore, through viable democratic institutions, we must ensure that the people who are suffering are finally able to hope for a better day.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Netherlands.

Mr. Majoor (Netherlands): Today's debate is important, especially considering the close relationship that exists between this Council and the Peacebuilding Commission. I gladly take this opportunity to share our views on the Peacebuilding Commission two years after it first became operational. I do so while expressing my thanks for the leadership of so many: Ambassador Takasu, the Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission; his predecessor, the representative of Angola; Carolyn McAskie, who headed up the Peacebuilding Support Office so well; Jane Holl Lute, who has started so energetically in the same function; and, above all, the Governments of the countries on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission, and more specifically, the Government of Sierra Leone, represented here by the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs.

From the outset, allow me to state that I align myself with the statement of France on behalf of the European Union.

The Peacebuilding Commission has invested considerable time and effort over the past two years in implementing its mandate through the development of the appropriate strategic approach and implementation mechanisms. The result has been the conclusion of Peacebuilding Cooperation Frameworks for three countries on its agenda — Burundi, Siena Leone and, recently, Guinea-Bissau — based on an extensive mapping of peacebuilding gaps in those countries. Those efforts, which the Commission has had to undertake while operating in largely uncharted waters, have involved the active participation of all relevant stakeholders, ranging from the Governments in the countries concerned and the Peacebuilding Commission's members to the various stakeholders on the ground.

While those in themselves are important achievements from which the Peacebuilding Commission should draw confidence, they are only a stepping stone towards the ultimate goal of the Commission. That goal is and must remain making a positive difference in the countries on its agenda by ensuring that the identified peacebuilding gaps are effectively addressed. That is, as has been reiterated many times before, the most effective way to prevent a relapse into conflict in countries that have been struggling to strengthen their stability and democracy since their conflict ended.

That is therefore where the added valued of the Peacebuilding Commission ultimately lies, and that is the basis on which the Commission should be assessed. Taking that as our yardstick, and recognizing the considerable achievements that have been made both by the Governments of the countries on its agenda and by the Commission itself, we can fairly say that we are not there yet.

What is needed at this point in time — and this should guide the Peacebuilding Commission's activities in the coming months — is concrete support from both existing and new donors to address the peacebuilding gaps that have been identified in the countries on the Peacebuilding Commission's agenda. We have so far done the strategic work for Burundi, for Sierra Leone and for Guinea-Bissau. We have committed to ensuring that the identified gaps will be

addressed. It is now time to translate our commitments into concrete engagements.

To do that, support from the United Nations on the ground will be crucial. In that context, I welcome the establishment of the first-ever United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL) and the fact that UNIPSIL is mandated to work closely with the Peacebuilding Commission and support the implementation of the Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework and the Peacebuilding Fund's projects.

Such a continued integrated United Nations presence in Sierra Leone is needed to consolidate the gains made thus far and provide coherent and coordinated support to the Government of Sierra Leone in its peace consolidation efforts. UNIPSIL needs to be fully staffed and operational as soon as possible.

I welcome the commendable efforts of the Acting Executive Representative of the Secretary-General and express the hope that a permanent appointment will be made as soon as possible. Effective and continued leadership of the Office is of paramount importance. We cannot afford another gap in the leadership of that Office at such a crucial time.

Sierra Leone offers a number of lessons on integration and collaboration between the Peacebuilding Commission and the Security Council. Those lessons should be applied in the upcoming Council discussions on strengthening the United Nations political missions in Guinea-Bissau and the Central African Republic. In particular, the Guinea-Bissau Peacebuilding Strategic Framework should be used to guide the mandate renewal process for United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in Guinea-Bissau in the same way as the mandate for UNIPSIL took into account the peacebuilding priorities identified in the Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework for Sierra Leone.

There is unwavering support for the Peacebuilding Commission's original mandate and a consensus that the Commission is on the right track. We are all anxious to see the Commission succeed, which in practice means that the countries on its agenda succeed. However, the Commission's success, unfortunately, is not determined by our vocal support or our endorsement of its mandate; it is determined by our readiness to make a contribution in the country concerned. When the time comes to thoroughly evaluate the Commission in the light of its original mandate — and that time will come — we must be confident that every effort was made to make it work.

The time to make the Commission work is now. We have before us sufficient strategic documents to determine where our support is needed the most. Let us not waver, and let us offer whatever expertise or funds we can muster to ensure that the four countries on the Peacebuilding Commission's agenda will be irreversibly on track towards consolidated peace and stability.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of El Salvador.

Mrs. Gallardo Hernández (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation welcomes the initiative to hold this open debate of the Security Council on the report of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund. El Salvador endorses the statement that was made by Ambassador Takasu in his capacity as Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission, and pays tribute to his leadership of the Commission.

The Peacebuilding Commission was established with the aim of creating a new peacebuilding architecture in the United Nations system to help countries emerging from conflict and moving from war towards development, as was once the case of my country. That vision was expressed by the heads of State and Government at the 2005 World Summit.

El Salvador shares that vision and is grateful for the honour of acting as Vice-Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission. Serving on the Commission enables us to repay the aid that we received from the international community at times of difficulty for my country. We have made efforts to share the experiences of our own peacebuilding process by sharing a comprehensive vision of what that process involves, including specific topics such as demobilization and reintegration of armed forces and the creation and functioning of the national civilian police, among others.

Sharing experience likewise implies contributing to the prevention of the resurgence of violence by involving various players in the process and combining efforts with regional organizations and friendly countries, without forgetting the implementation of strategies that promote sustainable development.

The Commission and the membership in general have been strengthened by the work undertaken by the Working Group on Lessons Learned, which we have the honour to chair. This Group, as has been said, has examined a broad spectrum of issues ranging from elections and risk reduction in post-conflict situations to local governance and decentralization, as well as transitional justice, the situation of internally displaced persons in the context of peacebuilding, the strengthening of the fiscal capacity of States by supporting their national budgets, matters related to the environment, conflicts and peacebuilding, inter alia. We have been able to review cross-cutting issues that are fundamental for those processes. Among them, I would add gender and peacebuilding through the strengthening of the participation of women, as well as the importance of regional approaches in peacebuilding.

We feel it is important that the work of this Working Group be strengthened in the future, bearing in mind that it is a forum for dialogue and exchange of experiences and best practices, which permits a broad review of the various factors that affect peacebuilding in post-conflict countries and, in particular, with a view to helping on-the-ground initiatives in the countries under consideration.

El Salvador supports strengthening the relation of our Commission with the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. We are pleased that contribution pledges exceeded the expectations of $200 million. We align ourselves with other delegations in advocating greater collaboration between the Peacebuilding Fund and the Peacebuilding Commission, as well as greater transparency and accountability. We hope that the Peacebuilding Fund will benefit national and regional projects that can transform certain aspects of the realities on the ground and strengthen the peacebuilding process. The fact that there is no armed violence in a particular context or region should not preclude consideration for transferring resources to a key sector for peace, security and development.

El Salvador is aware of the importance of equitable participation of the various regional groups in the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, as conflicts are not, unfortunately, the sole preserve of any particular society. On the contrary, they are a product of a series of internal and international factors that come together to respond violently, unfortunately, to the unmet demands of various social and political groups. From that perspective, to the extent that the international community works together and assumes the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, there will be more opportunities for political dialogue and shared experiences between post-conflict countries and the United Nations system as a whole to make substantive contributions to help people in conflict overcome their differences by peaceful means, resorting to dialogue and negotiation as a foundation for that national understanding.

By way of conclusion, El Salvador calls on the regional groups and the member countries of the Peacebuilding Commission to consider, with an inclusive perspective, the matter of equitable participation in the Commission. Let us secure the best options for overcoming a certain impasse that concerns us at the moment and define in good faith the composition of the Commission, since our true mission is to help the countries in question on the ground.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Bangladesh.

Ms. Jahan (Bangladesh): First let me thank you, Mr. President, for convening this open debate of the Security Council on the report of the Peacebuilding Commission. I believe such deliberations will further the operational relations between the two bodies.

Given the complexity of its work and an increasingly demanding mandate, the work of the second session of the Peacebuilding Commission is indeed commendable. We thank its Chairperson, Ambassador Yukio Takasu, for his able stewardship. We are pleased that the Commission's working method has been further consolidated. The Chairs of the country-specific configurations have also played important roles in their contributions to the Commission's work. We commend Sierra Leone, Burundi and Guinea-Bissau for their cooperation and for taking national ownership of the Peacebuilding Commission initiative. We wish similar success to the Central African Republic.

The Peacebuilding Support Office and the Peacebuilding Fund have also played catalytic roles in our shared objectives. We hope that the recent restructuring of the Office will result in greater efficiency and improved servicing for all the Commission configurations.

The disbursements of the Multi-Donor Trust Fund and other funds should be rapid and immediate to ensure early stabilization of countries in the peacebuilding process. That is required to support national and local authorities in delivering a peace dividend. In that regard, we may remind ourselves that one of the main purposes of the Peacebuilding Commission is to marshal resources for reconstruction and institution-building in countries emerging from conflict.

Therefore, the Commission should play a central role in any discussion regarding the creation of the new rapid funding mechanism. We feel that members of the Commission should be more frequently updated on the operations of the Peacebuilding Fund, and information on disbursements should be shared with them. The relationship between the Commission and the Fund and their individual roles have to be made clear to the stakeholders on the ground in order to dispel the ambiguity about eligibility for Fund support. We are heartened by the fact that the Fund has exceeded the $250 million target. This is testimony to the continued commitment of the international community to the goal of peacebuilding.

As we all agree, the multidimensional areas of peacekeeping and peacebuilding require a certain expertise. However, as we may recall from the discussion in the meetings of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, the idea of civilian observers is still not agreed upon. We are not in favour of the creation of any type of cadre or pool comprising United Nations staff for rapid civilian deployment. We believe that filling the vacant posts in field missions and country offices by personnel recruited from Member States and host countries, in both military and civilian categories, can better serve that purpose.

On the question of relation between such United Nations capacities and national capacities, we would like to emphasize that national ownership of the peacebuilding process is a fundamental prerequisite. We emphasize ever-greater ownership by the respective Governments of the countries on the agenda. In our perspective, national ownership is the key to sustaining progress and preventing the country in question from relapsing into conflict. It is indeed a shared moral obligation to be vigilant about the special needs of countries emerging from conflict and stepping towards recovery, reintegration and reconstruction.

As one of the largest troop-contributing countries, Bangladesh is actively engaged in United Nations peacekeeping activities. As a developing country, we have experienced home-grown ideas like microcredit and women's non-formal education, which we believe can work miracles in economic advancement and women's empowerment. Bangladeshi peacekeepers have to some extent transferred that development philosophy to the countries of their deployment, and as a member of the Peacebuilding Commission, Bangladesh fully supports integrating those concepts into the economic recovery and development dimensions of the peacebuilding process. To begin with, we could focus on youth development, employment generation and women's employment in consolidating the initial gains of peace.

We pledge our continued support to the Organization's peacebuilding goals. We would like to reiterate that the Peacebuilding Commission should have the central role in post-conflict peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts. The Commission should act as a spearhead for a coordinated, coherent and integrated peacebuilding architecture.

My delegation is of the view that the operational relations of the Peacebuilding Commission with the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council and other intergovernmental United Nations bodies and relevant stakeholders should be further strengthened. We urge the members of the Security Council to extend their full support to the Commission, so that it may fully function as a competent advisory body to address post-conflict situations. The international community should assist the Commission in fulfilling its mandate in all possible ways.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Norway.

Mr. Wetland (Norway): It is my pleasure to speak on behalf of the Nordic countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Sweden and Norway. Allow me initially to express our profound gratitude to Ambassador Takasu of Japan for his continued leadership and the lucid remarks that he made at the launch of our discussions here today.

Let me also say how pleased we are to see the new Assistant Secretary-General of the Peacebuilding Support Office, Ms. Jane Holl Lute, here among us. We have absolutely no doubt about the professional

experience that she brings to this format, to this room, and we will be working with her to make the Peacebuilding Support Office an even more successful part of United Nations activities. Best of luck to her from all of us.

With the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission we have started to fill the previous gap in our institutional ability to help countries in the transition from war to lasting peace. While we have seen considerable progress during the lifespan of the Commission — I believe it was the Ambassador of Indonesia who used the term "infancy" here today, that the Peacebuilding Commission is in its infancy — we believe that some factors need increased emphasis. I will address three of them here today.

First, we still have a way to go to ensure effective coordination within the United Nations and with other partners. One main purpose of the Peacebuilding Commission is to bring together all relevant actors to marshal resources and to propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery.

After two years of gaining experience, we must stay focused on enhancing cooperation with the international financial institutions, especially the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, as well as with other, regional organizations. The Peacebuilding Commission should be given a more central role in ensuring that the international community is a more reliable partner to Governments in post-conflict situations. The role of neighbouring countries is also essential. In the case of Burundi, we wish to commend in particular the Regional Peace Initiative for Burundi and the South African Facilitation for their indispensable role in support of a durable peace in Burundi.

Secondly, we must recognize that peacebuilding is part of our core agenda, and not a subsequent phase or a subsidiary activity to peacekeeping operations. Peacebuilding should be a central component for the beginning of the transition from war to lasting peace, and that must be recognized at all levels. It will require constant political attention, on the part of the Security Council and, indeed, the Secretary-General.

We therefore emphasize the practice of inviting Peacebuilding Commission Chairs to brief the Council on a regular basis, as well as opportunities for briefings by the Assistant Secretary-General of the Peacebuilding Support Office to the Security Council. Peacebuilding means addressing the most critical areas of nation-building, and that may entail slow progress and setbacks at times. But we must never waiver in that undertaking. It is all about instilling hope and showing the promise of a new beginning.

Thirdly, peacebuilding will not happen unless there is genuine national ownership. That is why continued resource mobilization and early capacity-building is key. We must never forget that the populations of post-conflict countries are normally found among the bottom billion. The fight against poverty remains one of the essential reasons why peacebuilding is crucial. It is crucial, therefore, that commitments are implemented, and that applies also to the national institutions and authorities themselves. But peacebuilding is a partnership, and the international community must shoulder its responsibility.

It is crucial that the Peacebuilding Commission continues the search for an appropriate working format. For that reason, the Peacebuilding Support Office should strengthen its focus on strategic planning and should be entrusted with utilizing the capacities of the United Nations as a whole. The success of the Peacebuilding Commission rests on the extent to which it can target sectors that fall outside the coverage of other funding institutions and contribute to early and tangible results on the ground.

Peacebuilding can become a success story for the United Nations. But even more importantly, it could be the path to political stability and development and a life in dignity for millions living in post-conflict countries. As such, it is a real opportunity, but also a challenge, and as such, it must continue to be a priority concern for the Security Council.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12:50 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.5998

Security Council

Sixty-third year

Provisional

5998th meeting

Tuesday, 21 October 2008, 12.45 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Zhang Yesui	(China)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Grauls
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Koudougou
	Costa Rica	Mr. Weisleder
	Croatia	Ms. Lahovski
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	Indonesia	Mr. Kleib
	Italy	Mr. Riccardo
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Dabbashi
	Panama	Mr. Suescum
	Russian Federation	Mr. Safronkov
	South Africa	Mr. Laher
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Brown
	United States of America	Mr. DeLaurentis
	Viet Nam	Mr. Dang Hoang Giang

Agenda

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

08-56234 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 12.45 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Ileka (Democratic Republic of the Congo) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

After consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council expresses its grave concern at the resurgence of violence in the eastern provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its potential regional implications. It is alarmed by the humanitarian consequences of the recent fighting and urges all parties to immediately respect a ceasefire.

"The Security Council expresses its deep concern over continued threats to the safety of the civilian population and to the conduct of humanitarian operations. The Council strongly condemns the continuing recruitment and use of children by armed groups, as well as the continued prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence in the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It urges all parties to comply fully with their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law, human rights law and refugee law.

"The Security Council reiterates the need to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It once again calls on all armed groups to immediately lay down their arms and present themselves without any further delay or preconditions to Congolese authorities and the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) for their disarmament, repatriation, resettlement and/or reintegration, as appropriate.

"The Security Council reaffirms that the Goma and Nairobi processes constitute the framework within which long-term stability in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo should be pursued. The Security Council urges all the parties to the Goma and Nairobi agreements to implement their commitments effectively and in good faith. In this respect, the Council strongly condemns the recent declarations by Laurent Nkunda calling for a national rebellion.

"The Security Council reiterates its strong support to MONUC in helping restore peace in the Kivus and encourages MONUC to reinforce its action to ensure the protection of civilians. The Council expresses its full support for the disengagement plan elaborated by MONUC and accepted by the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and urges all parties to abide by it.

"The Security Council welcomes MONUC's intention to reconfigure its forces and optimize their deployment so as to enhance its efficiency within the existing mandate and troop ceiling. The Security Council takes note of the additional capacities for MONUC requested by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. The Council requests the Secretary-General to present a full analysis of the situation and recommendations in his next report to the Council.

"The Security Council urges the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to take effective steps to ensure that there is no cooperation between elements of the Armed

Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda. The Council also calls upon the Governments in the region to cease all support to the armed groups in the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

"The Security Council urges the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Government of the Republic of Rwanda to urgently engage in efforts to settle their differences, including through reactivating the Joint Verification Mechanism, and calls upon them to implement the Nairobi communiqué fully. The Council encourages the Secretary-General to step up his efforts to facilitate dialogue between Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

"The Security Council strongly condemns the recent attacks by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), including the abduction by the LRA of 159 schoolchildren in villages in Oriental Province. The Council recalls the International Criminal Court indictments against members of the LRA leadership on charges of, among other things, the enlistment of children through abduction, as a war crime."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2008/38.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.5999

Security Council

Sixty-third year

Provisional

5999th meeting

Wednesday, 22 October 2008, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Zhang Yesui	(China)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Belle
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Tiendrébéogo
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Jurica
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	Indonesia	Mr. Natalegawa
	Italy	Mr. Mantovani
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Mubarak
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Sawers
	United States of America	Mr. Wolff
	Viet Nam	Mr. Bui The Giang

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

08-56421 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Lynn Pascoe, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs.

It is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Lynn Pascoe, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, to whom I now give the floor.

Mr. Pascoe: I am grateful for the opportunity to brief once again on the situation in the Middle East. Let me turn first to the political process between the Israelis and the Palestinians. Bilateral contacts between Israel and the Palestinians continued, with meetings held between Israeli negotiators and Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni and the lead Palestinian negotiator, Ahmad Qurei, on 23 September; between President Abbas and President Peres on 26 September in New York; and between advisers.

In Israel, the process of political transition is ongoing. On 21 September, President Peres commissioned newly elected Kadima Party leader Livni to form a new Government. As of this report, coalition negotiations are continuing, with the deadline extended by President Peres to 3 November.

On 26 September, the Secretary-General convened a meeting of the Quartet principals at United Nations Headquarters. The Quartet called upon the parties to make every effort to conclude an agreement before the end of 2008 and underlined its commitment to the irreversibility of the process leading to the creation of a Palestinian State living in peace and security alongside Israel.

The Quartet principals welcomed the parties' suggestion to brief the Quartet on the negotiations and expressed interest in coordinating such a meeting at mutually acceptable time, hopefully in the coming weeks. The Quartet also agreed that spring 2009 could be an appropriate time for an international meeting in Moscow.

The Quartet commended Egypt for its efforts to help reunite the West Bank and Gaza within the framework of the legitimate Palestinian Authority. Quartet members and Arab League representatives held a constructive discussion, over an iftar hosted by the Secretary-General on 26 September, on how to work together in the crucial period ahead in support of the Israeli-Palestinian process, Palestinian reunification and regional peace. The meeting also reaffirmed the central importance of the Arab Peace Initiative.

In that context, the Secretariat continues to work closely with Arab countries. Last week, Special Coordinator Robert Serry visited Amman for an audience with King Abdullah II of Jordan and meetings with other senior officials.

On 22 September, the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee comprising the parties and key donors, as well as Quartet Representative Blair, met on the margins of the General Assembly. The Committee commended the efforts of the Government of Prime Minister Fayyad to implement its reform and development agenda and encouraged the continuation of ongoing security and institution-building efforts.

It urged further steps, including the easing of movement and access restrictions. Donors have contributed over $1.3 billion in budgetary aid during 2008 towards Palestinian Authority recurring costs and development initiatives.

The security efforts of the Palestinian Authority, in accordance with the Road Map, focus on deepening progress in the Jenin governorate, which Special Coordinator Serry visited today. Efforts are being extended to Hebron, where Palestinian security forces recently discovered a tunnel allegedly used by militants. We also note positively that considerable progress has been made by the Palestinian Authority in defining a strategy for the development of the judicial sector and that the number of judges and prosecutors has doubled during the past year.

Despite those efforts, the situation on the ground is not improving in the way that is required. Israeli-Palestinian violence this past month claimed the lives of seven Palestinians, two of them children, while injuring 116 Palestinians and 34 Israelis. Among the incidents were the killings of a 61-year-old Palestinian woman and a 15-year-old child when the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) fired at stone-throwers in the West Bank. There were clashes in Ni'lin village on the first day of the annual olive harvest and an incident in Ni'lin on 23 September in which Israeli border police reportedly fired tear gas at a civilian delegation including a European Commission official and local Palestinian officials and members of non-governmental organizations. There were also physical assaults by settlers against Palestinian farmers and the burning down of an olive grove on 15 October. This year's olive harvest is in its early days, and concerns exist for the safety of Palestinian farmers as they harvest crops in the vicinity of settlements and outposts, as well as about their ability to gain access to land isolated between the Barrier and the Green Line.

Israeli Defence Minister Barak has denounced those attacking olive pickers and has stated that the IDF is making a major effort to protect farmers, but he has said that it is impossible to guard all locations. We reiterate the call of the Quartet for the enforcement of the rule of law, given continued settler violence against Palestinian civilians.

On 23 September, 19 Israelis, among them eight IDF soldiers, were injured when a Palestinian man from East Jerusalem drove a car into a group of pedestrians. The driver was shot dead by an IDF officer at the scene. Tensions were heightened by communal clashes in the city of Acre in Israel on and in the days following the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur.

While the Government of Israel has taken some positive steps aimed at easing certain internal movement for Palestinians in the West Bank, there are, according to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, currently 630 obstacles to Palestinian movement throughout the West Bank. Barrier construction has also continued in occupied Palestinian territory, contrary to the International Court of Justice advisory opinion.

The United Nations continues to engage Israeli authorities on access restrictions imposed on United Nations staff in both Gaza and the West Bank and the facilitation of the import of materials still required for the resumption of stalled United Nations projects in Gaza. The Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator is seeking solutions to the operational problems of the United Nations in a manner consistent with Israel's security concerns and is looking to work even more closely with the Israeli Government and, in particular, with those who are able to provide solutions.

There has been no progress in the reporting period on Israel's key Road Map and Annapolis commitments, that is, a genuine settlement freeze, removal of outposts and opening of Palestinian institutions in East Jerusalem. Settlement construction continues across the West Bank, including in East Jerusalem. The United Nations position on their illegality is well known. The Quartet's clear statement expressed concern about increasing settlement activity and called on Israel to meet its obligations. These must be heeded.

We continue to follow closely all developments pertaining to the Old City of Jerusalem. The month of Ramadan passed with smoother coordination than in previous years, but a majority of Palestinian Muslims were not able to pray at Al-Aqsa mosque due to permit and access restrictions. Under increased Israeli security presence in the Old City, a synagogue was opened by settlers in the Muslim quarter on 12 October. The Secretary-General continues to call for an end to unilateral action in Jerusalem and reminds all parties that the status of the city remains an issue for permanent status negotiations.

The calm brokered by Egypt is by and large holding between Gaza and southern Israel, although incidents have taken place, including the firing of a rocket into the Negev yesterday and the subsequent closure of border crossings between Israel and the Gaza Strip. The Erez crossing was reopened, but commercial crossings remain closed today.

Unfortunately, there has been no improvement in the movement of goods and people in and out of Gaza. During the period, supplies of petrol, diesel, cooking gas and industrial gas fell short of weekly needs. The number of the truckloads of imported goods allowed into Gaza decreased compared with the previous period. Construction projects valued at $240 million, including $149 million-worth of United Nations construction projects, remain on hold owing to the absence of construction materials.

The number of people who entered Israel for medical treatment during the first four weeks of September decreased by 38 per cent compared with the first four weeks of August. Some 150 students were denied permission to leave Gaza to reach their places of study abroad. On 8 October, the IDF, citing security concerns, denied entry into Gaza to eight Israeli medical volunteers who had been issued permits.

Fourteen Palestinians were reportedly killed as a result of collapses, closures or accidents in tunnels along the Gaza-Egypt border during the reporting period. Media reports suggest that several thousand Palestinians gain income from the tunnel industry, which is reportedly regulated by Hamas. The current situation underscores the importance of a sustained and orderly reopening of crossings into Gaza under the Palestinian Authority, in accordance with the 2005 Agreement on Access and Movement, as called for by the Quartet.

The continued split between the West Bank and Gaza is having increasingly adverse effects. Two Palestinians, including one child, were killed in Gaza in internal violence. The teachers' strike reported last month continued, affecting around 250,000 pupils. Thousands of new substitute teachers are being brought into the schools by Hamas, and frictions were evident on 21 October when a student was declared clinically dead after having fallen three stories following an altercation involving a Hamas-appointed teacher. The health workers' strike continued, causing concerns over the quality and timely provision of services and delays in elective surgeries and referrals. The percentage of essential drug items jumped from zero to 22 per cent, double that of the essential drug items out of stock in August, when responsibility for delivering medical supplies to Gaza was transferred from the World Health Organization to the Palestinian Authority Ministry of Health.

The Egyptian-mediated process aimed at the reunification of Gaza and the West Bank within the framework of the legitimate Palestinian Authority is ongoing. Earlier this month, Egyptian mediators completed a round of meetings with Palestinian factions, which have now received a draft proposal for consideration. President Abbas has also continued regional consultations, including a recent visit to Damascus. We look forward to all regional States lending their support to Egypt's efforts under the auspices of the League of Arab States, which will meet at the foreign minister level in Cairo next month.

We continue to call for the International Committee of the Red Cross to be granted access to Israeli Corporal Gilad Shalit, now in his twenty-sixth month of captivity, and for his release. We reaffirm our support for efforts to secure his release, as well as that of a number of Palestinian prisoners.

No further indirect Israeli-Syrian negotiations under Turkish auspices took place during the reporting period. The Quartet expressed its desire to see those talks intensify with the goal of achieving peace in accordance with the Madrid terms of reference, and we hope they will resume soon. The situation in the occupied Syrian Golan remained quiet during the reporting period, although Israeli settlement activity is ongoing.

A car bomb exploded in Damascus on 29 September, reportedly killing 17 civilians and injuring more than a dozen others.

On 16 October, Lebanon and Syria signed an agreement providing for the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries. That is a landmark event that should bring benefits to both countries and to the region. The Secretary-General reported on that development in more detail in his recent report to the Council on the implementation of resolution 1559 (2004) (S/2008/264).

In an important milestone in the implementation of the Doha Agreement, the Lebanese Parliament adopted a new electoral law on 29 September. The law reflects the electoral districting agreed upon at Doha and incorporates some of the reforms that had been proposed by the Boutros commission.

A year after the end of the fighting in the Palestinian refugee camp of Nahr el-Bared, the first phase of rubble removal began on 17 October and is expected to last for approximately eight months. That is a welcome development for the more than 27,000 people who were displaced as a result of the fighting. Funding is urgently required to meet reconstruction costs and the humanitarian needs of the displaced.

Security incidents continued to occur in the northern city of Tripoli during the reporting period. On 29 September, a bomb that targeted the Lebanese Armed Forces in the city killed six people, including four soldiers. Alleged members of a terrorist cell that

the Lebanese authorities believe is affiliated with Fatah al-Islam were subsequently arrested on 12 October by Lebanese security forces. The terrorist cell is believed to have been behind two other deadly attacks against the Lebanese Armed Forces earlier this year.

The situation in the area of operations of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon remained tense but generally quiet during the past month. Israeli air violations continued at an average of 10 per day during the month.

The United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon, Michael Williams, began work as of 1 October. Mr. Williams is responsible for coordinating the work of the United Nations in Lebanon and for representing the Secretary-General on all political aspects of the Organization's work in the country. He is also responsible for following up on the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006).

Notwithstanding the transition currently under way in Israel, we hope that Israeli-Palestinian negotiations will not only continue but intensify between now and the end of the year, within the Annapolis framework. We look forward to the parties briefing the Quartet in the near future. Conditions on the ground in the West Bank must significantly improve through parallel actions and the meeting of Road Map commitments, especially on settlements. Conditions in Gaza must be eased, the calm extended and unity pursued under Egyptian auspices. We encourage the continuation and intensification of the indirect Israeli-Syrian talks. Further work is also essential to build on recent positive developments in Lebanon.

The Secretary-General will continue to work intensively for the implementation of all relevant Security Council resolutions and for the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Pascoe for his briefing.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.30 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.6000

Security Council

Sixty-third year

Provisional

6000th meeting

Thursday, 23 October 2008, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Zhang Yesui	(China)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Grauls
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Kafando
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Vilović
	France	Mr. Ripert
	Indonesia	Mr. Natalegawa
	Italy	Mr. Terzi di Sant'Agata
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Dabbashi
	Panama	Mr. Suescum
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Sawers
	United States of America	Mr. Khalilzad
	Viet Nam	Mr. Le Luong Minh

Agenda

Peace and security in Africa

Note verbale dated 3 October 2008 from the Permanent Mission of Djibouti to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2008/635)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

08-56550 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Peace and security in Africa

Note verbale dated 3 October 2008 from the Permanent Mission of Djibouti to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2008/635)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Djibouti and Eritrea, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedures.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I request the Chief of Protocol to escort His Excellency Mr. Ismail Omar Guelleh, President of the Republic of Djibouti, to a seat at the Council table.

Mr. Ismail Omar Guelleh, President of the Republic of Djibouti, was escorted to a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): On behalf of the Security Council, I extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Ismail Omar Guelleh, President of the Republic of Djibouti.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Desta (Eritrea) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in response to a note verbale dated 3 October 2008 from the Permanent Mission of Djibouti to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council, contained in document S/2008/635.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Ismail Omar Guelleh, President of the Republic of Djibouti.

President Guelleh (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, and the other members of the Security Council for making it possible to hold this exchange with the Council today.

We are at a crossroads in Africa. Against all predictions, many of our countries are booming and making gradual progress and now have genuine prospects. That is thanks to better macroeconomic management and growing confidence on the part of international investors in the potential of the continent. We are now in a period of unprecedented economic growth. Although its effects cannot be denied, the current financial crisis may have a relatively minimal impact. Nevertheless, as in other parts of the world, increased food and energy prices are making the situation on the continent more complicated. In that regard, I should very much like to acknowledge and thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his efforts and leadership in raising international awareness of the harmful and devastating effects of high food and energy prices, especially on the most vulnerable in the developing world.

Over the past three decades, my country, which is a small, peace-loving and progressive, has been able to survive and preserve its stability in the face of several ongoing regional wars and violent civil conflicts. These continue to be tumultuous times characterized by pain, human sadness and great poverty. Unfortunately, the Horn of Africa continues to experience more than its fair share of unhappiness, tragedy, dislocation and destruction. That is untenable in human, social, economic and political terms. In that regard, as it did in the past in connection with the Economic Community of West African States, the Council may wish to take an in-depth look at that hotbed of regional tension.

Somalia in particular is in ruins. It has been involved in a bloody conflict that is distinct from the long self-destructive war that has been waged by warlords. It is no longer an exclusively a Somali affair — not that it ever was. It therefore requires full, transparent, honest and neutral regional and international involvement to determine once and for all the destiny of a people whose future as a nation is at stake. The increased international attention to the piracy along the Somali coast is understandable and legitimate, but let us not lose sight of the crucial fact that the piracy is part of the growing chaos in Somalia. It is a symptom of the power vacuum in that country, whose current political structure is too fragile, weak and coming apart; it does not enjoy the respect, interest

or trust of the Somali people. In addition, it appears to be its own worst enemy. Unfortunately, Somalia is a country that continues to be hostage to divergent political, strategic and economic interests. Half of its population requires emergency humanitarian assistance. The people of Somalia suffer from one of the highest levels of displacement, drought, unemployment and inflation

The region, the United Nations, the African Union and other regional organizations are deeply committed to the re-establishment of peace and stability in Somalia. To that end, a crucial meeting is planned for the end of this month at Nairobi. We have a collective moral and legal responsibility to pay much more attention to that forgotten conflict and the crisis in Somalia. In the context of international peace and security, the Security Council has the primary responsibility for saving that country from its unavoidable descent into a nightmare of national destruction. The Council bears the weighty responsibility of resolutely deciding that it is time to protect the people living in that chaotic situation. Our failure to act will have serious consequences. I therefore call on the Council to act now and to act responsibly.

Following the abrupt, inexplicable and ill-considered forceful occupation of part of Djibouti's territory by Eritrean forces earlier this year, my country has adopted a policy of calm and caution that has provided sufficient time for bilateral contacts at all levels to resolve our differences amicably and peacefully. All of our efforts have been in vain, however, for Eritrea's military construction on the ground continues. Given that brazen and illegal situation, the lack of cooperation on the part of the Eritrean authorities and their failure to respond to our initiatives, we have been left with no choice but to mass our troops along the border to protect our territorial integrity.

Despite the military confrontation imposed on us, we have also sought out the good offices of the African Union, the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the United Nations and friendly States. While we have been tireless in the search for a peaceful and diplomatic solution, Eritrea has continued to reinforce its troops and has carried out further incursions into our territory. Intensive and sustained regional and international efforts to find a solution to the crisis have been met only with disdain and outright rejection by the Eritrean authorities. Eritrea's response, which continues to be misguided, arrogant and fallacious, illustrates its contempt for our efforts and those of regional organizations and the United Nations.

Immediately following the armed conflict of 10 June 2008, which resulted in dozens of victims and the taking of prisoners on both sides, the Security Council condemned the Eritrean authorities. That condemnation was supported by many countries and regional organizations. Thereafter, the Security Council deployed a fact-finding mission to Djibouti to assess the situation in the region of Doumeira and the growing tensions between the two countries. The results of the mission are before the Council today. The conclusions are serious, clear and unquestionable. They reflect the erratic and irresponsible behaviour of the Eritrean regime, as well as its deliberate and dishonest misrepresentation of the facts.

The various calls of the international community have been met with deafening silence and a blatant denial that any crisis or conflict exists in the region. When they have deigned to reply, the Eritrean authorities have made mind-boggling and baseless allegations of foreign interference. Allow me to remind the Council that the high point of the United Nations fact-finding mission was a visit to the Doumeira region, where its members were able to observe the deployment of the two forces.

Given that Eritrea remains blind to the seriousness of the situation and continues to reject all attempts by regional and international organizations to convene talks, including the efforts of the United Nations to defuse tensions, it is becoming increasingly clear that Eritrea does not want to respect international norms and obligations. It is therefore utopian to believe that we can make even a modicum of progress towards dialogue or the normalization of relations in the face of a silent and unreasonable aggressor. It takes two parties to hold a discussion.

I would like to reiterate here the determination of my country to recover all its territory now illegally occupied by Eritrea — Ras Doumeira and the Doumeira islands. Our forces have withdrawn a few kilometres from the contested area, in conformity with the presidential statement of 12 June 2008 (S/PRST/2008/20), which stipulated that the two parties must show the greatest restraint possible and

withdraw their forces in order to return to the status quo ante.

The impasse imposed on us by Eritrea is intolerable and unacceptable. The provocation and inexplicable invasion of our territory are totally unacceptable. It is imperative that the Council address the conflict between Eritrea and my country in a timely and comprehensive manner. We have waited long enough and have given the Eritrean authorities more opportunities than they deserve to accept dialogue and negotiation instead of confrontation.

However, their decision has been taken. Their choice is very clear, because they continue to ignore the urgent appeals of the Security Council and regional bodies, which are simply trying to solve the conflict — which will have a much broader effect on the region and even on the international community — in a peaceful manner. Without a doubt, the last thing that the Horn of Africa needs today is another conflict in the heart of the region. Given the never-ending wars that have dominated and devastated the region for too long, the consequences of another war are obvious and dangerous.

We know that the Eritrean people in no way wish to have an armed conflict with the Republic of Djibouti. They are aware of our long-standing friendship and of the fact that the Djiboutian nation has been a peace-loving nation ever since its independence. The Eritrean people are the victims of bad governance and of the irresponsible, pernicious and unreasonable behaviour of their leaders. To put those people, who have suffered far too much from the belligerent attitudes of their leaders, on the warpath with a neighbouring and brotherly country once again is a deplorable and morally reprehensible act.

I would ask the members of the Security Council to remain very vigilant. I would also alert them to the danger posed by drawing comparisons between the current conflict and that between Eritrea and Ethiopia. Indeed, if there is any similarity between those two conflicts, it is only because they share the same destabilizing and destructive element: Eritrea, which is directly or indirectly mixed up in every conflict in the Horn of Africa. It is therefore not only imprudent but dangerous to suggest such a link, which would only encourage Eritrea to indefinitely occupy our territory, lead its people into other useless, fratricidal conflicts, and continue its unbridled adventurism in the region.

I would invite the Council to consider in its discussion, and with a view to taking a decision, the following key points, which are broadly illustrated in the mission's report (S/2008/602).

First, Eritrea, as a State Member of the United Nations, must be called upon in earnest to honour its international obligations and to cooperate with this Organization with a view to accepting its good offices to resolve the crisis.

Secondly, the immediate priority for my country is the demilitarization of the conflict area and the withdrawal of the forces of the two countries to their pre-February 2008 positions.

Thirdly, the two countries must show themselves fully willing to re-establish mutual trust, particularly by activating the existing bilateral mechanisms and submitting to a legal process or arbitration leading to an agreed demarcation of the border. We invite the Council to implement those ideas in order to convince Eritrea to withdraw from the zones that it has occupied since March 2008.

In conclusion, given the seriousness and urgency of the situation, I call on the Council to require both countries, within a period of approximately three weeks at the latest, to devote themselves fundamentally to resolving the crisis. Any failure to implement such a decision should give rise to the implementation of sanctions by the Council. The aggression against my country must not be ignored, remain unpunished or, even worse, be taken lightly by this Council.

Continued inaction in whatever form will not only encourage but reward Eritrea's attitude. That would leave my country with but one option: the option of war. We would like the Council to take urgent and effective action on this issue. The conflict represents a financial black hole, an enormous burden on our limited resources and a distraction from our development objectives. My people expect understanding and support from this Council.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank the President of the Republic of Djibouti for his statement.

I invite the representative of Eritrea to take the floor.

Mr. Desta (Eritrea): I wish to thank you, Mr. President, and the members of the Security Council for the opportunity accorded to my delegation to

participate in this meeting of the Council requested by His Excellency Mr. Ismail Omar Guelleh, President of the Republic of Djibouti, in connection with the so-called Djibouti-Eritrea question, under the agenda item "Peace and security in Africa".

On 24 June 2008, during a similar meeting of the Security Council attended by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Djibouti, my delegation expressed its views on how the crisis was instigated and had been internationalized. The series of hostile campaigns waged against Eritrea and the unwarranted statements that followed without any concrete evidence were also addressed. I do not wish, therefore, to dwell on the genesis of the manufactured problem, but allow me to briefly highlight the following points.

There have been no new developments since the brief incident in June that was instigated by the unprovoked attack unleashed by Djibouti against our units inside our own territory. The deliberate design to unleash a new crisis in our region has fortunately been forestalled.

Despite the negative campaigns, Eritrea has all along chosen the path of restraint and patience in order to avoid falling into the trap of escalating a crisis not of Djibouti's making but created by others. Contrary to the claims made, Eritrea has not taken any land that belongs to Djibouti, and it does not have any territorial ambitions.

Although this is not related to the issue at hand, Eritrea has communicated its security concerns about the Eritrea-Ethiopia-Djibouti border area, as stated in document S/2008/446. Ethiopia has set up a new military camp on Mount Musa Ali, perched at the junction of the three countries. Ethiopia has built, from the Djiboutian side, a network of roads winding up the mountain and deployed offensive long-range artillery and heavy equipment directed at Eritrea.

Eritrea would also like to take this occasion to remind Council members that Ethiopia continues to occupy sovereign Eritrean territories in violation of the United Nations Charter and the Algiers Peace Agreement. Members have received the most recent report of the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission, which identifies the dimensions of the problem with full clarity and will be addressed exhaustively in due time.

As far as this manufactured problem with Djibouti is concerned, it must be recalled that the two leaders had spoken about the issue when President Isaias Afwerki took the initiative to call President Guelleh and decided to address it in a calm and quiet manner that takes into account the sisterly ties that existed between the two countries and the need to ensure peace and security in the subregion. This occurred when Eritrea was approached by the Emir of Qatar, to whom Eritrea showed its openness to solve any real or perceived source of problems between the two States.

Eritrea's desire continues to be the restoration and cultivation of good-neighbourly relations with Djibouti on the basis of full mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty. However, Eritrea will not allow itself to be dragged into or invited to engage in a diversionary and fabricated conflict, or to be obliged to have an exchange on a situation designed to foment conflict on the ground.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I shall now give the floor to members of the Security Council.

Mr. Ripert (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to start by welcoming the presence of the President of Djibouti, Mr. Ismail Omar Guelleh, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Djibouti and the Permanent Representative of Eritrea.

The delegation of France listened with a great deal of interest to the presentations just made. The conflict that opposes Eritrea to Djibouti has entered into a less critical phase. The situation at the border between the two countries remains tense but calm. There is no more fighting on Ras Doumeira or on Doumeira Island, and there is no further contact between the armed forces of the two States. This progress is attributable solely to Djibouti which, in accordance with the Security Council's presidential statement of 12 June (S/PRST/2008/20), withdrew its forces to the status quo ante, ensuring that the two armies were no longer in contact with each other.

Our Security Council should not lose sight of what is important: deadly clashes took place at Doumeira in June, for which Eritrea was responsible, and the effects of that aggression continue. The Security Council has unambiguously condemned Eritrea, in its 12 June presidential statement. The report of the United Nations fact-finding mission (S/2008/602) established that, unlike Djibouti, Eritrea

had not withdrawn its troops to the status quo ante. The top priority, thus, is for Eritrea to meet the very clear demand of the Security Council.

The resolution of this crisis requires that both countries settle the issue of the delimitation of their common border. It is a complex issue, especially because the agreement that still regulates the border is from a time when neither of the parties existed as a sovereign State. The border has never been demarcated, and this uncertainty twice led to tensions between the two countries in the 1990s.

It is thus incumbent upon both parties to determine the framework within which they will ease their differences. France, like others, has on a number of occasions offered its expertise if that could be of assistance. The reference agreements were a Franco-Ethiopian treaty of 1897 and two Franco-Italian protocols of 1900 and 1901 respectively. This, however, requires dialogue between both parties, which is currently non-existent.

At this stage, the Eritrean authorities have rejected all proposals for dialogue. Eritrea has not issued visas to the United Nations fact-finding mission, even when the President of the Security Council called upon the parties to facilitate the mission. Eritrea refused to admit similar missions proposed by the League of Arab States and the African Union. Nor did it respond positively to the Secretary-General's offer of good offices or to the various proposals for dialogue on this issue by multilateral organizations and various United Nations Member States.

The second priority is that Eritrean authorities recognize that a crisis exists in Doumeira and that they be willing to talk about it. Last Friday's visit to Asmara by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission gives us reason to hope that Eritrea will finally agree to resume dialogue with the international community. France would like to convey its gratitude to Mr. Jean Ping for his efforts and encourages the African Union to make progress in this field to ensure that a genuine channel of communication be established, which would make it possible to finally discuss the crisis between Djibouti and Eritrea.

France is also convinced that the United Nations Secretariat has a very positive role to play. It hopes that the Secretary-General be able to formalize his proposal of good offices to Eritrea and dispatch a mission to the area.

France considers that the continuation of this crisis and Eritrea's rejection of all dialogue represent a serious threat to Djibouti and the entire region. Djibouti and France are linked by long-standing relations of friendship and cooperation, based on trust. In this framework, France intends to comply fully with all the obligations that link it to Djibouti.

The parties will be able to resolve their border dispute only through dialogue. It is unacceptable, therefore, for one of the parties to be able to indefinitely prolong the crisis, which is dangerous both for Djibouti and for the whole of the Horn of Africa.

As President Guelleh underscored a few minutes ago, that region, which has already been racked by war and affected by the ongoing humanitarian tragedy in Somalia, has experienced its share of conflict. France stresses that no preconditions can be placed on resolving the border dispute between Djibouti and Eritrea.

France would like the Council to return to this issue in the near future. My delegation therefore proposes to rapidly engage in bilateral consultations so that, when the time comes, a draft text can be proposed to the Council. This would firmly reiterate the Council's demands on Eritrea, in particular regarding the withdrawal of its forces; it would condemn Eritrea if it continues to reject any dialogue on the subject; and it would encourage the efforts of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations. These demands should be accompanied by a clear timeline. It is our responsibility and the responsibility of the Council to closely follow this issue.

Mr. Kafando (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of my delegation, I should like to welcome His Excellency Ismail Omar Guelleh, President of the Republic of Djibouti, and his delegation, who honour us by apprising us of developments in the conflict between his country and Eritrea. We especially thank him for the important statement he has just made to the Council. I also welcome the presence of Ambassador Araya Desta, Permanent Representative of Eritrea to the United Nations.

We note that this is the second time that Djibouti has appeared before the Security Council represented at a very high level. The first time, it was represented by the head of Government, and this time it is represented by the head of State himself. I mention this

to show the extent to which the commitment of the Government of Djibouti, at the very highest level, bears witness to the trust which it places in the United Nations to assist in resolving this unfortunate situation. It is only right therefore to pay tribute to the authorities of Djibouti for the good will they have always shown in seeking a final solution to the dispute.

The region of the Horn of Africa is already wracked by too many conflicts and many other challenges, as the President of Djibouti so aptly underscored, to suffer yet another adversarial front. That is why the delegation of Burkina Faso deplores the continuing tension between Djibouti and Eritrea, which are brotherly countries united by historical and long lasting ties.

But what can and must the Security Council do? One thing is certain. The Council has already shown its resolve to remain fully involved in the conflict, particularly, through the dispatch of a fact-finding mission to better understand the situation, even though, unfortunately, that mission was not received by one of the parties. Moreover, the Council has sent a clear message to Eritrea and to Djibouti in its presidential statement of June 2008 on the issue (S/PRST/2008/20).

Following the statements that we have just heard, it is clear that it is incumbent upon the Council to reaffirm to the international community the guiding principles that can help in restoring normalcy: first, the withdrawal of all forces to their initial positions, in other words their positions before the conflict; secondly, the demilitarization of the disputed area; thirdly, the commitment in good faith and with the full trust of both parties to refrain from the use of force; and finally, the acceptance by both countries to sit at the negotiating table to address their differences. And if one of the parties refuses to engage in that direct dialogue, the two States can resort to other forms of conciliation, either arbitration or facilitation, which are, as we know, two ways to settle disputes recognized by international law, or even resort to litigation, which has been successful in similar situations.

If the Council is not able to resolve the dispute — and we hope that the Security Council will strive to, and will succeed in, resolving it — but if that is not possible, we believe that the Council should back, with its full influence, the use of one or other of those two options.

In conclusion, we should like to pay tribute to all the initiatives and all the efforts undertaken in that regard. We especially pay tribute to the efforts undertaken by the African Union and the League of Arab States. We reiterate our gratitude to Djibouti for its cooperation with the United Nations fact-finding mission and, naturally, we back the Secretary-General's offer of his good offices to find a peaceful solution to the crisis. We again invite both parties to accept that offer.

Mr. Grauls (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I should like, in turn, to welcome the presence of the President of the Republic of Djibouti, Mr. Ismail Omar Guelleh, in our discussion and to thank him for his address. I also wish to thank our colleague, the Ambassador of Eritrea, Mr. Desta, for the presentation that he has just made spelling out his country's position.

Belgium shares the concern of the Republic of Djibouti in the face of the complete absence of any progress since the clashes with Eritrea last June. Belgium also welcomes the moderation and restraint that the Republic of Djibouti has shown thus far, and we encourage it to continue to adopt that approach.

In June, our Council condemned the military action conducted by Eritrea in Ras Doumeira and on Doumeira Island. At the same time, it encouraged both States to cooperate by offering the assistance of the United Nations, potentially in cooperation with the other offers, particularly from the African Union and the League of Arab States.

Eritrea refused that dialogue with Djibouti, and that is what has led Djibouti to bring the issue before our Council. Today, we are forced to note that Eritrea seems no more inclined to engage in dialogue with the United Nations, the African Union, the League of Arab States or any other mediator.

Eritrea tells us that it is not occupying any parcel of Djibouti territory, unlike its Ethiopian neighbour, which is occupying large areas of Eritrea across a border very precisely delineated by an arbitral decision.

Last July, the United Nations decided to withdraw from the border between Ethiopia and Eritrea, having been unable to help the two States to find common ground, despite having left no stone unturned to achieve that. Here too, neither the good offices of the

Secretary-General nor the constructive proposals presented to the parties by the Security Council were able to make any progress. Rather than building on an arbitral ruling in its favour, Eritrea chose the path of isolation.

Eritrea is a Member State of this Organization and must, therefore, comply with its obligations under the Charter. The peaceful settlement of disputes and the non-use of the threat of or the use of force lie at its very core. There is a need to remind Eritrea that those obligations are the counterpart of its rights and privileges as a Member of the Organization.

Even if a solution to the border dispute with Ethiopia could, we all agree, stand to benefit the whole of the Horn of Africa, there can be no question of linking that dispute with that with Djibouti. For Ethiopia, an arbitral ruling exists, and the recognized solution is to implement that ruling following a very precise road map. For Djibouti, there would be merit to delineating the border carefully, and our Council should invite the parties to start such a process.

There will be no solution without dialogue. Therefore, Eritrea must be invited to accept such a dialogue and to establish the necessary conditions for it as soon as possible. Our Council should revisit that issue.

Insofar as four months have passed since the June presidential statement, it is our duty to spare no effort to ensure that calm rapidly returns to that hotbed of tension.

Belgium continues to believe that the hand held out to Eritrea by the international community will in the end be seized for the good of the people of that region, which is well understood. However, to achieve that, the Council will have to continue to involve itself and the Secretary-General will have to step up his efforts, so as to establish the conditions for that normalization.

Mr. Terzi di Sant'Agata (Italy): I wish to extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Ismail Omar Guelleh, President of the Republic of Djibouti, and to his delegation and to thank him for providing the Council with updated information and views on the situation around the border with Eritrea. What His Excellency Ismail Omar Guelleh has just said about Somalia is fully and vigorously shared by my country. The tragedy affecting the Somali people and the wider regional impact the Somali crisis is having requires an adequate and urgent response by the international community and by this Council.

I would also like to reiterate my Government's appreciation for the efforts made by the President of the Republic of Djibouti in the reconciliation process in Somalia. I also wish to thank the Permanent Representative of Eritrea, Ambassador Desta, for taking part in today's debate and conveying his Government's perspective.

Italy shares the concerns expressed by President Guelleh on the ongoing militarization of the area of Ras Doumeira, which could become another source of instability in a region already strained by heavy security and by humanitarian and development challenges.

Italy commends the Government of Djibouti for the restraint exercised since the outbreak of this situation, as well as for having withdrawn its troops, as requested of both parties by the Security Council presidential statement of 12 June (S/PRST/2008/20). In the face of its repeated offers to engage, Djibouti's sense of frustration is understandable and deserves our full solidarity.

Conversely, my country regrets the lack of engagement of Eritrea with regional and United Nations efforts to facilitate a bilateral settlement, in particular the fact that the Eritrean forces have not responded to international calls for withdrawal and the lack of cooperation with the United Nations fact-finding mission. I hope that the presence of Ambassador Desta among us today and his contribution to the debate may be a sign of renewed will to take part constructively in a solution to the present situation.

The United Nations fact-finding mission has produced a balanced and informative report (S/2008/602) that provides a number of useful proposals. Reactivating dialogue and returning to the status quo ante are immediate priorities that need to be accompanied by long-term sustainable solutions. My Government shares the view contained in the report that the final settlement of the border between Djibouti and Eritrea would be a real contribution to resolving the current crisis. We encourage both parties to agree on a framework to address this issue from a legal perspective. Like France, Italy is ready to place at the disposal of the parties its historical and technical

knowledge of the process leading to the current border situation.

We see the need for a consistent approach to all border disputes in the subregion. The dispute between Yemen and Eritrea was resolved by a decision of the International Court of Justice. The border dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea was entrusted by the parties to the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission, whose decisions need to be applied on the ground. We do not see why a similar model cannot be found by Djibouti and Eritrea to settle the border issue in Ras Doumeira.

Finally, I would like to like to stress the importance of the facilitating role of regional organizations, namely the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the African Union and the League of Arab States, whose efforts must be fully sustained by the Security Council. A close collaboration between those efforts and initiatives of the Security Council is the key to a successful conflict prevention strategy. At the same time, we should make sure that the present crisis does not disappear from the radar screen of the Council and that progress is closely monitored in order that we can adjust our action accordingly.

Sir John Sawers (United Kingdom): Our thanks go to President Guelleh for his very clear and informative briefing. It is good to have the Foreign Minister of Djibouti with us here as well. I am grateful to Ambassador Desta of Eritrea for his statement.

I would like to begin by expressing my Government's deep sympathy with the concerns raised by President Guelleh. We understand the concern on the Djibouti side at the action of Eritrea and the burden that that has imposed on Djibouti owing to the need to divert scarce resources to help defend its position. The United Kingdom commends Djibouti for its constructive response in recent months and for cooperating with the Secretary-General's good offices. We look to Eritrea to take an equally cooperative approach.

We reiterate the Council's message set out in the presidential statement of 12 June (S/PRST/2008/20), which urged Eritrea, in particular, to withdraw its forces to the status quo ante. It is deeply regrettable that Eritrea rejected the Secretary-General's good offices mission as carried out by Under-Secretary-General Pascoe. Should Eritrea continue to block international efforts to facilitate dialogue, determine future arrangements for decreasing the military presence and develop confidence-building measures, the Security Council will need to consider what steps it might take to break the impasse. We welcome the planned action by our French colleagues in this regard.

The visit by African Union Chairman Jean Ping to Eritrea is a positive step, and we hope that that will prove to be a useful channel for making progress.

We urge both Djibouti and Eritrea to enter a dialogue to resolve their dispute on the border peacefully. We encourage the Secretary-General to continue to use his good offices in an effort to foster a dialogue between the two countries. We also encourage those in the region to use their good relations with either party in support of a peaceful resolution of this unnecessary dispute.

Mr. Natalegawa (Indonesia): On behalf of the Indonesian delegation, I have the pleasure of welcoming the participation in today's Security Council meeting of the President of the Republic of Djibouti, His Excellency Mr. Ismail Omar Guelleh. We listened attentively to his statement and, of course, to the statement of the Permanent Representative of Eritrea.

The situation between Djibouti and Eritrea is a cause of concern for Indonesia. The situation poses real danger for both countries and, beyond, for the region. It is thus a problem that needs to be resolved peacefully.

We thank the Secretary-General for his follow-up to the Security Council's request to send a fact-finding mission to the region. We regret that the mission, while it visited Djibouti, was unable to go to Eritrea; this deprived us of an opportunity to have an explanation of the views of one of the key parties. We would benefit from clarification of the nature of the current situation from the perspective of all the parties. Today's deliberations will go some way in addressing that need.

The efforts of various parties, in particular the African Union, the League of Arab States and Intergovernmental Authority on Development, to assist in bridging the two parties' differences are welcome and should be commended.

The Security Council's consideration of the Djibouti-Eritrea issue needs not only to address the tension itself, but also to support the resolution of the underlying causes, including the border problem. The

parties may deny having aggressive intentions, territorial ambitions or an intention to allow the situation to slide into a full blown conflagration, and indeed there are no reasons to believe otherwise. Notwithstanding their intentions, however, the situation could develop in an unanticipated direction and take on a logic of its own towards wider conflagration, as many conflicts do.

We therefore welcome the report of Djibouti's withdrawal of its forces to the status quo ante. A similar step by Eritrea would be equally welcome. Furthermore, both sides need to commence diplomatic and judicial approaches to settle their dispute, either directly or with the involvement of a third party. It is our belief that the resolution of the current crisis cannot be based on the status quo, which will not be sustainable. There is a danger in letting the situation on the border fester without a resolution.

We urge both countries to redouble their efforts to determine and demarcate their border as soon as possible. They need to come together to discuss and find mutually acceptable ways and means to do so. Both countries should see it as being in their vital interest to resolve the border problem peacefully.

Finally, we recognize the linkages between the tension between the two countries and the broader security issues in the Horn of Africa. The report of the United Nations fact-finding mission (S/2008/602) made a connection between this issue and the Eritrea-Ethiopia border problem. While we wish to avoid blurring the two issues, the fact that these countries are geographically in proximity to each other needs to be recognized.

Mr. Dolgov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We welcome the participation in today's meeting of the President of the Republic of Djibouti, Mr. Ismail Omar Guelleh. We listened attentively to his statement. We also welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Djibouti. We acknowledge the assessment, to which we listened. We also listened with attention to the representative of Eritrea.

A month ago the Security Council considered the report of the fact-finding mission that visited the region from 28 July to 6 August (see S/2008/602). The Russian delegation notes that the report provides a detailed picture of the history of that border dispute, as well as the chronology of many events that led to a drastic escalation of the situation and armed clashes from 10 to 12 June.

The Russian Federation expressed serious concerns regarding the June events, which claimed the lives of dozens of individuals. Along with other members of the Security Council, we condemned Eritrea's military actions against Djibouti in Ras Doumeira and the island of Doumeira. We again call on both sides to undertake to respect the ceasefire and to show maximum restraint. Eritrea should immediately withdrawal its forces to the former positions.

We are carefully following the development of the situation on the Djibouti-Eritrea border. We believe border problems should be settled exclusively by negotiations, and we call on both sides, especially Eritrea, to cooperate with each other and to undertake diplomatic steps to resolve the issue peacefully, in strict compliance with international law and the United Nations Charter.

We back the efforts by the African Union, the League of Arab States and other organizations and individual States aimed at the rapid settlement of the crisis and at normalization of relations between Djibouti and Eritrea. We call on both sides to fully cooperate in this process. We await implementation of the Security Council's recommendations to the Secretary-General for the immediate use of his good offices, in coordination with regional efforts, to help promote bilateral negotiations between Djibouti and Eritrea in order to ease tensions by political means, developing methods to strengthen mutual trust and the peaceful settlement of the border situation. We hope that Eritrea will agree to such a good offices mission.

We back the idea regarding the usefulness of international high-level mediation acceptable to both Djibouti and Eritrea. We reaffirm our readiness to carefully follow, along with other Security Council members, developments in the situation between the two States so that it does not grow into a dangerous regional conflict in the Horn of Africa.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): Allow me to begin by welcoming the presence of President Guelleh in the Council, together with his delegation, including the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Djibouti. We thank the President of Djibouti for his statement. We also appreciate having heard from our colleague, the ambassador of Eritrea.

The presence of President Guelleh in the Council is important. We have already been briefed by the Prime Minister of Djibouti, and today we have been briefed by the President. This seems to indicate that the Government of Djibouti feels very strongly that the issue at hand is very serious and should really come to the attention of this Council.

South Africa regrets the tension between Eritrea and Djibouti. Those two friendly countries are neighbours and would wish to see the tension reduced by the withdrawal of troops from the border area. We hope and believe that the visit by the Chair of the African Union Commission, Mr. Jean Ping, to Asmara would be a good opportunity for Eritrea to convey its side of the story.

We regret that the fact-finding mission did not visit Asmara, because we believe that Eritrea should also have an opportunity to tell its side of the story. We believe that mutual trust needs to be developed between those two countries to enable them to address the issues at hand, particularly that of the demarcation of the border.

We note that in his statement Ambassador Desta referred to the occasion when the President of Eritrea and the President of Djibouti spoke on this matter, but we hope that such communications will be intensified so as to build enough trust to deal with the issues at hand.

Otherwise, the concerns the President of Djibouti expressed today echo what was said by the Prime Minister of Djibouti before this Council and constitute a cry for the Council to help address them. We hope that both parties will use the opportunities arising from being friendly African countries, being neighbours, the opportunities that are provided not only by the African Union but also by the Arab League to try to find a way out of this situation. It would be regrettable if the situation came to the point where the Council would be forced to take action on this matter.

Lastly, let me also pay tribute to Djibouti's contribution to finding a solution in Somalia. Djibouti has hosted the parties in Somalia, and they produced an agreement that is currently being implemented. The situation in Somalia is indeed a nightmare, as President Guelleh has said. The contribution to Somalis that Djibouti has made to try to find a way out of that nightmare is greatly appreciated.

Mr. Vilović (Croatia): Croatia too would like to join other Council members in welcoming the President of Djibouti, His Excellency Mr. Ismail Omar Guelleh, as well as his delegation, including the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and thanking him for the timely and comprehensive briefing he has provided us. We also welcome the participation of the representatives of Eritrea at today's meeting.

We take note of the relative calm on the ground in the region at this time, but at the same time, we are cognizant of the overall fragility of the situation and its potential for further flare-ups in an already volatile region.

In that connection, we would like to recall the Presidential statement of 12 June this year (S/PRST/2008/20), in which all parties, but in particular Eritrea, were called on to exercise restraint, to withdraw their forces to the status quo ante and to resolve the dispute through dialogue and peaceful means, including through third-party mediation. The proposals of the fact-finding mission are a step in that direction. At the same time, however, the refusal of Eritrea to accept the Secretary-General's good offices is regrettable.

That being said, we welcome all efforts by the United Nations and by regional organizations, in particular the African Union and the League of Arab States, to try to help the parties de-escalate tensions and move towards a peaceful solution to the crisis. We sincerely hope that those efforts will be honestly and wholeheartedly accepted by all parties.

Mr. Urbina (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to begin by welcoming to the Council His Excellency Mr. Ismail Omar Guelleh, President of Djibouti. His presence here demonstrates his country's willingness to find a negotiated solution to the situation in which Eritrea is placing it. We also welcome the presence of our colleague, the Permanent Representative of Eritrea, and of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Djibouti.

Costa Rica deeply regrets that, despite the sacrifices that continue to be faced by the peoples of the Horn of Africa, they are seeing their lives threatened once again by the scourge of another war that could, as President Guelleh quite rightly stated, divert resources essential for their development and well-being. My delegation is concerned at Eritrea's lack of willingness to establish a dialogue with

Djibouti in order to find a peaceful solution to their differences, despite the many calls made by the international community, including the African Union, the Arab League and the Council itself. On the other hand, we recognize the actions carried out by Djibouti. We believe that the position taken by Eritrea in its dispute with Djibouti reflects serious disregard of its obligations and a disturbing lack of respect for international law that threatens international peace and security.

Costa Rica is convinced that compliance with the provisions of the Council is not an obligation only for countries that believe them to be in keeping with their national interests and intentions. The Charter of the United Nations deserves respect and attention, and the international community deserves the peace of mind of knowing that the countries that participate responsibly in the Organization are seriously trying to build a better world.

That is why we believe that we must now appeal once again to Eritrea and to Djibouti to commit themselves, in addressing their differences, to resolving them by engaging in dialogue, adhering to international law and fully using the peaceful mechanisms at their disposal. The Council should play an important role in facilitating such a course of action. It is only by implementing mechanisms for peaceful dispute settlement involving both diplomatic and legal considerations and participation by regional organizations that we will be able to ensure a lasting solution to the conflict.

Finally, we would like to stress that it is important that both parties explore the possibility of resolving their border dispute through new agreements resulting from arbitration and mediation and from recourse to higher legal bodies if necessary.

Mr. Le Luong Minh (Viet Nam): First of all, I would like to thank His Excellency Mr. Ismail Omar Guelleh, President of the Republic of Djibouti, for his presence and his statement to the Council. I also thank the representative of Eritrea for his participation.

My delegation has followed closely the situation along the border between Djibouti and Eritrea. We remain concerned about the sharp escalation in tension and the suspension of diplomatic relations between the two countries as a result of their border dispute. In our judgement, that dispute, if left unchecked, could spill over into a wider regional conflict, with greater potential consequences.

We call for maximum restraint by both parties, for their commitment to a ceasefire and for a withdrawal by Eritrea of its forces to the status quo ante. We urge the two countries to cooperate and to engage in diplomatic efforts to diffuse tension and generate political space for a peaceful resolution of the dispute.

My delegation commends and supports the mediation efforts of the African Union, the Arab League and the Organization of the Islamic Conference to find ways to end the conflict and the dispute. We encourage the Secretary-General, in coordination with regional stakeholders, to use his offices to develop confidence-building measures and engage both parties in dialogue with a view to finding a peaceful solution to the dispute that is in conformity with the fundamental principles of international law and the United Nations Charter.

Mr. Dabbashi (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like to join preceding speakers in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Ismail Omar Guelleh, President of Djibouti, and to thank him for his statement. I also welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Djibouti and his delegation and thank the representative of Eritrea for his statement.

We in Libya are extremely concerned at the crisis that has erupted in recent months between two brotherly nations, in particular since those countries belong to a region that has long been beset by problems. Most people in that region are suffering the effects of war, including lack of security, food and medicine. It is regrettable that, thus far, the Security Council has not been able to come up with effective solutions to the problems in the region.

Like other countries, we believe that the situation between Djibouti and Eritrea could be worse; the border area is relatively calm. While we welcome that fact, we are still concerned at the lack of progress made thus far in finding a peaceful solution. It is also regrettable that the good offices of the Council, of regional organizations and other actors have not been received positively, which could lead to a new crisis. Fighting erupted again in June, and I believe that both countries are duty-bound to reply favourably to the message issued by the Council that same month.

As a member of the African Union, the League of Arab States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, Libya calls for the implementation of the resolutions adopted by those organizations. We welcome the repeated efforts of those organizations to help the two countries to resolve their dispute. We call on both parties to use those proposals to their best advantage.

With regard to the evident differences between the two brotherly countries with respect to the demarcation of their border, we hope that they will be able to reach an agreement on the international legal instruments to be used to resolve the issue once and for all. We insist on the need to continue to seek a peaceful solution to the crisis. We support the good offices of the Secretary-General and call on both parties to respond positively to them.

Mr. Suescum (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): We welcome President Guelleh and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Djibouti, as well as Ambassador Desta of Eritrea, and thank them for being with us today and for their briefings.

We view Eritrea's presence and participation in today's meeting, and Mr. Ping's visit to Asmara on behalf of the African Union, as signals that Eritrea intends to interact much more actively with the international community — the only way to achieve a peaceful solution to the conflict. In that respect, we urge Eritrea to respond to the good offices of the Secretary-General, which we fully support, and to the efforts of the African Union in particular. We further urge Eritrea to honour its obligations under the United Nations Charter and to heed the appeals of the Security Council, inter alia, to withdraw its troops in order to return to the status quo ante and to create a positive climate for dialogue between the parties and the potential facilitation of the mediators.

The Council can act only on the basis of the facts provided to it by the parties to a conflict. If the situation continues without the cooperation of one party, the United Nations will have no choice but to defend the territorial integrity of Djibouti. In the light of the contacts and dialogue that have taken place, Djibouti appears to be the threatened party and to be fulfilling its obligations under the Charter.

Mr. Khalilzad (United States of America): The United States would like to thank President Ismail Omar Guelleh for travelling all the way to New York to brief the Council on the continuing crisis between Djibouti and Eritrea. We appreciate the importance of the President's participation in this meeting and the content of his message. We take his message seriously. We hope that the same is true for all members of the Council and that we shall take appropriate note of and respond to the challenge that he has presented to the Council.

The United States also welcomes the presence of the Foreign Minister of Djibouti and of the Permanent Representative of Eritrea.

The United States remains extremely concerned about Eritrea's unprovoked attack on Djiboutian forces and its subsequent refusal to withdraw its troops or engage in peaceful dialogue to defuse the situation. We commend the Djiboutian Government for its efforts to find a peaceful solution to the crisis.

The United Nations fact-finding mission to Djibouti clearly documented the extent to which the Djiboutian Government has worked to resolve the crisis peacefully. The Government of Eritrea, however, has defied the international community by attacking its neighbour in a violent confrontation that left 44 Djiboutian soldiers dead and many more missing. The Eritrean Government has refused to cooperate or even to issue visas to the fact-finding mission dispatched by the United Nations to investigate the situation. The Government of Eritrea's failure even to acknowledge the existence of the problem, let alone the seriousness of the situation, is unacceptable.

The Security Council should take appropriate action to find a resolution to the crisis. The United Nations fact-finding mission has recommended that the United Nations dispatch a high-level envoy to the area to engage with Eritrea to find a peaceful solution to the crisis. The fact-finding mission further noted that "[i]n the event that the offer by the United Nations is again rebuffed by Eritrea, the matter should be referred to the Security Council for appropriate action" (*S/2008/602, para. 62*). The report's finding that "[a] sovereign country is being drawn into a crippling and unaffordable military mobilization, to deal with a situation that may ultimately threaten national, regional and international peace" (*ibid.*) reinforces the seriousness of those recommendations.

In line with the report's recommendations, the United States calls on the Secretary-General to dispatch a high-level envoy immediately. Eritrea

should be given a clear time frame in which to accept the assistance of the United Nations, the African Union or any other State, organization or body that is acceptable to both parties to find a peaceful solution to the crisis. However, if Eritrea rebuffs any such effort towards resolution, the Council must react appropriately. If we fail to do so, not only do we risk yet another costly and tragic war in an area that has already suffered tremendously, but we also jeopardize the credibility of the Security Council.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of China.

Like my colleagues who have spoken before me, I warmly welcome to New York the President of the Republic of Djibouti, His Excellency Mr. Guelleh, and thank him for his briefing to the Security Council. We also wish to thank the Permanent Representative of Eritrea for his statement.

Djibouti and Eritrea have tense relations arising from their border dispute. We deeply regret that tension and note that, following the outbreak of the border dispute between them in June, the Security Council issued a presidential statement (S/PRST/2008/20) on 12 June. We believe that the most important thing at present is for the parties, in the interests of their bilateral relations and of peace and stability in the Horn of Africa, to remain calm and exercise restraint so as to prevent the situation from deteriorating further.

We are always in favour of resolving differences through dialogue and negotiation, and we are opposed to the use of military means. We expect Djibouti and Eritrea to start a dialogue as soon as possible and to seek a solution to their differences through consultations on an equal footing. We also support the mediation efforts made by the United Nations Secretary-General and the regional organizations such as the African Union and the Arab League. We also call on Djibouti and Eritrea to cooperate with those efforts. We support the Security Council's continuing positive and constructive role in promoting that both sides resolve their differences through dialogue and negotiation.

I shall now resume my function as President of the Council.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.6001

Security Council

Sixty-third year

Provisional

6001 st meeting

Monday, 27 October 2008, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Zhang Yesui	(China)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Belle
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Tiendrébéogo
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Skračić
	France	Mr. Ripert
	Indonesia	Mr. Natalegawa
	Italy	Mr. Terzi di Sant'Agata
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Dabbashi
	Panama	Mr. Suescum
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Quarrey
	United States of America	Ms. DiCarlo
	Viet Nam	Mr. Le Luong Minh

Agenda

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

Eighteenth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (S/2008/645)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

08-56874 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

Eighteenth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (S/2008/645)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Côte d'Ivoire, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Bailly (Côte d'Ivoire) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the course of the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Choi Young-Jin, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire and Head of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire.

There being no objection, it is so decided. I invite Mr. Choi to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2008/645, which contains the eighteenth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Choi Young-Jin, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire and Head of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire . I now give the floor to Mr. Choi Young-Jin.

Mr. Choi Young-Jin: The eighteenth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), which is before the Council(S/2008/645), provides an update on the major developments in Côte d'Ivoire since his most recent report of 10 July 2008. With your permission, Mr. President, I would like to focus my briefing today on the most crucial issues of this period for Côte d'Ivoire, that is, identification and elections.

Those two issues will have a decisive and direct bearing on the future of Côte d'Ivoire and indeed on the UNOCI exit strategy. The Secretary-General's report refers to the seriousness of the logistical challenges facing the Ivorian dual identification-electoral process, which are bound to cause delays. But, at the same time, the report reveals that this process has now reached important milestones such as the successful financing arrangement and the launching of the identification process. At present, the accumulating delays constitute the foremost and primary concern for us because they may put at risk the entire Ivorian peace process.

It is almost one and a half months since the identification and voter registration process was launched on 15 September with a view to completing it on 30 October. Unfortunately, however, the pace of progress has been painfully slow. Acceleration factors will soon be introduced and many sites will soon attain "cruising speed". Yet the magnitude of the delay has taken almost everybody by surprise.

The main reason for that delay is the logistical complexity of the identification process. In Côte d'Ivoire, the elections process has become inextricably enmeshed with the identification process. Those two crucial and historic events are concomitantly unfolding in the country; 11 million people are expected to be identified with a very sophisticated identification mechanism and 9 million people are expected to register as voters. To make matters more complex, the identification process is in the charge of a dual operator system consisting of a private French company, SAGEM, and the Ivorian National Institute of Statistics responsible for the process.

To make matters even more complicated, the overall supervisory and implementing role has been

confided to the Independent Electoral Commission, which has a quadripartite composition. Three quarters of its members, including its president, have been provided by the two main opposition political parties and the Forces nouvelles. That mosaic composition is certainly sufficient cause for delay.

The accumulating delays are preoccupying. Yet we should not lose sight of the significant and strategic progress made until now, and we should continue to build on it. Indeed, delays notwithstanding, solid progress has been made: peace has been sufficiently restored so as to allow people to travel freely across the country; all the political actors remain firmly committed to the identification-electoral process; and the Mobile Court operation is now complete, with excellent results. As I reported in my previous briefing, all the financial arrangements for both the identification process and the elections have been secured. The Ivorian identification process and elections have been going slowly but making solid progress. In terms of financing, the Ivorian Government is bearing the lion's share of the cost, to the tune of around $200 million dollars. The long-awaited identification process has been launched with an enthusiastic participation from the population. I have visited several identification sites and met people queuing for several hours, some since 3 a.m., in order not to miss the identification process. That was a very heartwarming experience.

All that progress allows us to acknowledge that the delays due to bureaucratic red tape and logistical difficulties will remain manageable as long as momentum is kept alive. For the first time in the Ivorian crisis, the delays are mainly due to logistical aspects and not to political issues. The window of opportunity remains open. Millions of people will, in several months, be in possession of an identity card for the first time in their life, enabling them to travel and engage in business freely. The question of "Ivoirité" — or Ivorianness — that has been at the heart of the troubled Ivorian politics for the last two decades will be resolved once and for all. Thus, having reached milestones of such importance, the Ivorian process now seems irreversible.

As the Ivorian actors are struggling with the logistical delays, we, the international community, must redouble our efforts to bring timely financial, technical and logistical assistance to the Ivorian identification and electoral process.

With that in mind, UNOCI, along with the other United Nations entities and international community bodies in Abidjan, is trying to be as creative as it can to assist the Ivorian identification and electoral process: international donors are providing around $50 million for the electoral process, which will cost about $80 million; UNOCI transported the first batch of electoral materials, 15 tons of them, from Europe to Côte d'Ivoire using its own aircraft in July; and we have been providing air conditioners and other critical equipment to the identification sites as needed.

Now, having recently identified the lack of transportation means as one of the major impediments to the speedy progress of the identification process, UNOCI is, in cooperation with the Independent Electoral Commission, currently devising an overall transportation assistance scheme, dubbed Operation Transport. UNOCI will be making available its cars and drivers to all 34 regional electoral commissioners in the critical cities of Abidjan and Bouaké. Our military and police units are planning transportation of a significant portion of the identification agents and material throughout the country outside those two cities. UNOCI has entered into negotiation with Ivorian private transportation companies with a view to providing vehicles to the entire 1,000 identification sites in Abidjan and Bouaké.

Perhaps most importantly, in terms of planning and safeguarding the elections, UNOCI is providing valuable advice and assistance through its certification mandate and its Electoral Assistance Division. UNOCI, along with other United Nations entities, especially UNDP, will continue to give support by providing technical and logistical assistance to the Ivorian electoral process.

I trust that, with the combined efforts of the Ivorians and the international community, the Ivorian peace process will successfully meet the challenges of the elections and reunification of the country, which in turn will provide UNOCI with an exit strategy.

Before closing, let me touch upon the security issues. By virtue of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement, all Ivorian political actors have now formally joined the political mainstream of the elections. The impartial forces — of Licorne and UNOCI — are highly dependable and credible, to such a degree that virtually no one in Côte d'Ivoire deems a military provocation or disorder during the election

period plausible. On the other hand, civil disorders, as evidenced by the recent sporadic disturbances at identification sites, will remain UNOCI's main concern in terms of safeguarding both the process and the results of the election.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire, Mr. Choi Young-Jin, for his statement.

There are no further speakers on my list. In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of this subject.

The meeting rose at 10.20 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.6002

Security Council

Distr.: General
28 October 2008

Original: English

Official communiqué of the 6002nd (closed) meeting of the Security Council

Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 28 October 2008, at 10 a.m.

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

"At its 6002nd meeting, held in private on 28 October 2008, the Security Council considered the item entitled 'Briefing by the President of the International Court of Justice'.

"In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, the President extended an invitation under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure to Judge Rosalyn Higgins, President of the International Court of Justice.

"The members of the Council heard a briefing by Judge Higgins."

08-57344 (E) 281008

United Nations S/PV.6003

Security Council

Sixty-third year

Provisional

6003rd meeting

Tuesday, 28 October 2008, 3 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Zhang Yesui	(China)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Belle
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Tiendrébéogo
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Vilović
	France	Mr. Lacroix
	Indonesia	Mr. Natalegawa
	Italy	Mr. Mantovani
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Dabbashi
	Panama	Mr. Suescum
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Sawers
	United States of America	Mr. Khalilzad
	Viet Nam	Mr. Hoang Chi Trung

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2008/659)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

08-57267 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2008/659)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of the Sudan, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Mohamad (Sudan) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Alain Le Roy, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Le Roy to take a seat at the Council table.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Ms. Susana Malcorra, Under-Secretary-General for Field Support.

It is so decided.

I invite Ms. Malcorra to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, contained in document S/2008/659.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear briefings by Mr. Alain Le Roy, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, and Ms. Susana Malcorra, Under-Secretary-General for Field Support.

I now give the floor to Mr. Le Roy.

Mr. Le Roy: I thank you, Mr. President, for this opportunity to brief the Security Council on the situation in Darfur and the efforts of the United Nations, working with the African Union, to bring an end to that terrible conflict.

The Council has before it the most recent report of the Secretary-General on Darfur (S/2008/659). In accordance with Security Council resolution 1828 (2008), the report provides a detailed update on the status of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), the political process, the security and humanitarian situation in Darfur and compliance by all parties with international obligations.

I will not repeat the contents of the report, of course, but would instead like to share with the Council some of the impressions of my visit to the Sudan earlier this month. This afternoon, members of the Council will also be briefed by Under-Secretary-General Malcorra, who will speak on the logistical aspects of UNAMID's deployment.

I visited Darfur from 8 to 11 October. During that time, I travelled to El Fasher, Nyala and El Geneina, as well as to the site of the UNAMID team in Labado, South Darfur. I was also able to spend time in the internally displaced persons (IDPs) Kalma and Ardamata camps in South and North Darfur, respectively.

In addition to discussions with the leadership and staff of UNAMID and informative visits to the Mission and sector headquarters, I met with Government officials and had fruitful exchanges with IDPs both in Kalma camp and in El Fasher and with representatives of the humanitarian community. I also met with Minni Minnawi in a remote location in Northern Darfur.

I concluded my visit to the Sudan with conversations in Khartoum, where I met a range of senior Sudanese Government officials, including the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Deng Alor; the Senior Adviser to the President, Nafie Ali Nafie; the Director of National Security, Salah Gosh; and the senior official responsible for liaison with UNAMID, Mouttrif Siddiq.

Perhaps above all, the visit allowed me to obtain a first-hand understanding of the situation in Darfur, the conditions under which the 2.5 million displaced persons are forced to live and the many daunting challenges facing UNAMID in its effort to contribute to an improvement in the overall situation.

Turning to the peacekeeping operation, I would like to assure the Council that every effort is being made to move forward rapidly with deployment. Meeting the targets described in the Secretary-General's report, namely 60 per cent deployment by the end of the year and 80 per cent by the end of March 2009, is one of our highest priorities. Under-Secretary-General Malcorra will speak in more detail on this issue.

We speak of increased numbers, but more important is increased capability, which will give UNAMID a chance to implement the wide-ranging mandate given to it by the Security Council. Above all, it will give UNAMID the tools to protect civilians, as initially envisaged by the Security Council.

I believe we are making good progress. I visited the Nyala super camp, which is now an impressive facility nearing completion, built by UNAMID troops from a brownfield of scrub and desert. I saw first-hand the impact of effective relations between UNAMID and the humanitarian community in West Darfur, where the fighting of last January brought the peacekeepers and the humanitarians together to respond to the needs of the displaced. This partnership is now maturing and strengthening.

I also heard for myself from the internally displaced persons in Kalma camp that the 24-7 presence of UNAMID police in the camp was a clear, positive development of great importance, because in their view it greatly increased their safety. I also heard from Government officials at every level that a new page had now been turned and that every effort would be made to support our efforts to deploy UNAMID.

Those are all signs that the Mission is now taking shape and that the hard work of troop and police contributors and civilian staff is beginning to bear fruit. Nevertheless, I will be the first to tell the Council that we still have a considerable way to go. In many locations, we are still living with the legacy of the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS), where troops were equipped through ad hoc arrangements with donors and were often forced by circumstances and by the demands of the Mission to deploy to remote locations without the necessary materiel.

As a result, there are still locations where the men and women of UNAMID are seriously underresourced, vulnerable and living and working in extremely difficult conditions. I saw this clearly in Labado, where Rwandan soldiers are doing their best to project a presence despite evident shortages of some key equipment. This problem will ultimately be addressed by the rotation into UNAMID of new units that will be equipped to United Nations standards, drawing on assessed contributions.

In the meantime, business as usual is not an option, so we are doing everything we can to ensure that the basics are in place so that our troops and police can function. But the real solution will come with increased deployment of robust troops with the necessary capabilities.

That is why deployment continues to be the focus both here at Headquarters and for colleagues in Darfur. In practical terms, this means the senior leadership of the Mission is heavily concerned with the political, logistical and operational complexities of deployment. It means that significant military and police assets are being dedicated to escorting convoys and protecting construction sites. It also means that the Mission itself is in a state of real-time evolution. New units are arriving, new sites are being built and the overall picture is really dynamic. This should be viewed as positive news. Of course, we must continue to press forward to put the Mission in place.

At the same time, while we need to deploy and to focus our energies on the strengthening of the Mission, we cannot do so in isolation from the day-to-day tumult and tragedy of Darfur. There is still fighting. There is still displacement. We still receive reports of rapes and of civilians under imminent threat. In short, deployment may be UNAMID's focus, but it is not the

Mission's only priority. We are also implementing our mandate with regard to protecting civilians.

This presents a serious challenge. The environment is volatile. In fact, over the past weekend alone, we received reports of military action by the Sudanese Armed Forces in the North Darfur town of El Hilif, and of clashes between Government forces and the rebel forces of the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA)-Abdel Wahid near Kutum, also in North Darfur. There is also a relentlessly high level of banditry and criminality in Darfur. This year, up to mid-October, the United Nations and international non-governmental organizations have had their cars taken forcibly 273 times. In all of 2007 there were 158 such carjackings. In 2006, there were 116.

All of these aspects add up to a high-risk environment. In fact, it is an environment where there is not yet peace to keep. In United Nations terms, it is a phase IV security environment, where we are obliged to minimize risk for United Nations civilian staff by reducing their numbers until we are able to provide a reasonable level of security for them as they carry out their duties.

It is in this environment — short of the envisaged number of troops, without the envisaged military transport and attack helicopters and with infrastructure still being put in place — that the United Nations must act. It is a high-risk proposition, and I remind the Council that UNAMID has already sustained a significant number of casualties. Nevertheless, we must press on, because where we are able to lean forward there are tremendous opportunities to have a positive impact.

I mentioned Kalma camp earlier, and the 24-7 presence there of UNAMID police. That presence has clearly improved the security of the IDPs, who themselves say so. The humanitarian community says so as well, and the Government, in my meetings with Southern Darfur Government representatives, also welcomed our presence in the camps.

(*spoke in French*)

During my visit to Darfur, I has the opportunity to meet with Mission leadership and with colleagues in each of the Mission's three sectors to discuss how we could work together to multiply such forward-leaning action: by replicating the Kalma experience, by increasing patrols and by increasing outreach to our humanitarian colleagues. That must be our collective goal, even as civilian and military colleagues work to deploy in a difficult phase IV security environment.

Achieving this goal will require a unified effort. We will need leadership that is courageous even as it seeks to mitigate risk. Here at Headquarters, we will have do everything possible to move the remaining troops, police and equipment into the Sudan. But Member States will also have a central role to play. Troop and police contributors will have to continue mobilizing personnel and equipment, and donors will have to assist in filling resource gaps. Most important, the Mission will obviously need the full support of the Security Council and the acknowledgement that the risks being taken will be accepted as a collective and full responsibility.

I hope that we will be able to share some concrete achievements with the Council when this issue is next considered.

I should like also to take this opportunity to reiterate that the message I received from the Government at all levels, both in Khartoum and from the governors in the field, was uniformly supportive of the deployment of UNAMID. My predecessor, Mr. Guéhenno, always stressed that there could not be deployment without the complete and sustained support of the Sudanese Government. That is as true today as it was then.

I believe that we have come a long way in clearly defining the expectations and obligations both of the Government on the one hand and the African Union and the United Nations on the other. This clarity will help us to measure progress and to identify and address difficulties in going forward. Naturally, we shall continue to work in this way with the Sudanese Government in a spirit of transparency and good faith. Ms. Malcorra will be speaking to this issue in some detail shortly.

The report before you also provides a brief summary of the work of the Joint African Union-United Nations Chief Mediator for Darfur, Mr. Djibril Bassolé. In addition to what is found in the report, I would like to confirm that Mr. Bassolé is pursuing his intensive consultations with Government and rebel leaders.

In that respect, we look forward to the results of the Sudan People's Initiative launched by the

Government of the Sudan. As Mr. Bassolé himself said, when he assumed his functions, one of the central challenges for the Sudan People's Initiative will be to ensure that it prepares the conditions required for direct dialogue among the various movements.

Of course, in the meantime, Mr. Bassolé has maintained contacts with the Qatar initiative. As his work progresses, such contact has become increasingly important to ensuring that he receives the broad support required for him to effectively discharge the mandate given to him by the Council. For my part, I emphasize that Mr. Bassolé is continuing to benefit from the broad support of the United Nations, its Secretariat and the African Union in the implementation of his mandate.

I have spoken at some length about the status of UNAMID and our intention to do our utmost to protect civilians, even as we press forward with deployment — all in an extremely volatile environment. It is crucial, however, to be completely clear: UNAMID will not solve the problems of Darfur. Our around-the-clock presence in one camp cannot be replicated in the 71 camps of Darfur on behalf of 2.5 million refugees and displaced persons. UNAMID can only assist and contribute to a solution and alleviate the sufferings of part of the population. The conflict will end only through a negotiated political settlement, predicated, of course, on a decision by the parties to halt military action and engage in peace negotiations.

In that context, the recent violence in North Darfur is deeply disturbing. Unless there is a fundamental change in the intent of parties and the ambitious declarations made in Khartoum are reflected quickly on the ground, I fear that we will still be meeting in this Chamber to discuss Darfur for many months to come.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Le Roy for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Malcorra, Under-Secretary-General for Field Support.

Ms. Malcorra: I am glad to be here today to provide the Council with additional details regarding the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), following Under-Secretary-General Le Roy's introduction.

I believe that the report before the Council (S/2008/659) provides a full picture of the status of our deployment efforts, the major challenges we are facing, the steps we are taking to address those challenges and our projections for the deployment of UNAMID in the coming months. Given the thorough nature of the report, I will to be very brief.

We believe that we have now put in place the required systems and defined in detail the steps required to achieve our targets of 60 per cent deployment by the end of the year and 80 per cent by the end of March 2009.

As the Council is aware, those new, revised targets reflect a scaling-back of initial, extremely ambitious projections. The new targets are still ambitious but in our view can be achieved. The objective has always been and will continue to be the deployment of the maximum number of capable units to the locations where they are required in the shortest time possible.

Under-Secretary-General Le Roy has already described the kind of collaboration that will be needed to reach those goals. Troop and police contributors will have to mobilize personnel and equipment. Donors will have to fill resource gaps. The Government will have to deliver on its commitment to support our deployment efforts. And, of course, we at the United Nations will have to be at the centre of those efforts by coordinating the many moving parts of the complex process, by pressing as hard as we can to move personnel and equipment into the theatre, and by ensuring that the required preparations are in place to receive personnel and equipment when they arrive.

I can say with confidence that our plans are in place and being implemented, but the task before us is daunting. For example, there are approximately 6,000 sea containers, full of equipment required by UNAMID and bound for Darfur, which are currently at the United Nations logistics hub in El Obeid, which is in the central Sudan. That is to say, those containers are 800 kilometres from El Fasher — 800 kilometres of dirt track and narrow roads which were virtually impassable for large trucks during the rainy season, which ended only last month.

Getting this equipment to the Mission is central to the success of our deployment plan. The report before the Council describes the steps we are taking to do so and I am pleased to inform members that we have been making progress. Four new transport companies have recently been brought on board to

increase the movement of containers out of El Obeid and into Darfur.

That is in addition to an air bridge which we are putting in place to lift high-priority equipment directly from El Obeid into Darfur, and to our increasing use of rail and, in some cases, the direct air-lifting of equipment and personnel from troop-contributing capitals all the way to Darfur. We have been doing some useful work with the Friends of UNAMID in that regard, and we thank them for that.

The other major pillar of our deployment plan relates to engineering work. New camps must be constructed, old camps must be expanded and critical infrastructure must be put in place. The Secretary-General's report describes the actions being taken to ensure that we can meet the engineering demands of starting up a massive operation in that remote location.

What I would like to stress here is that we must be prepared to be flexible and creative as we continue to implement our plans. We will, in particular, need our military engineering units to show maximum flexibility and to work throughout the Mission area on a wide variety of tasks.

Finally, I would like to conclude my remarks by informing the Council that I will be returning to Khartoum next month for a second tripartite meeting with the Government of the Sudan and the African Union. The first meeting of the Tripartite Committee, which took place on 7 October and which is reflected in the Secretary-General's report, was extremely useful.

Together with the African Union and our Sudanese counterparts, we were able to identify critical areas for cooperation and specific requests for Government support. In many ways, the second meeting will be even more important than the first, since it will give us all an opportunity to evaluate concrete progress against commitments. It will allow us to put our ears to the ground.

In closing, I look forward to keeping the Council apprised of the results of those very important discussions.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Sudan.

Mr. Mohamad (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I feel it is my duty to convey to you, Mr. President, the condolences of the Government and people of the Sudan for the Chinese who were killed in cold-blood in a barbaric and heinous terrorist crime that reflects the destructive approach of the Justice and Equality Movement and its goals. The crime followed through on the Movement's previous well-known threats against the Chinese presence in the region and deserves strong condemnation. In May this year, in its notorious efforts to spread the crisis from Darfur to other areas, it attacked the Sudanese capital itself. Through you, Mr. President, I should like to convey our sincere condolences to the families of the victims, to wish a swift recovery to the wounded and to express the hope that those still being held captive will be released.

In addition, I should like to congratulate you once again, Mr. President, on your assumption of the post of Permanent Representative of China, a country that has strong relations with our mother continent, Africa, and is linked to the Sudan by strong ties of friendship and communication. I am also pleased and proud to see you presiding over the Security Council for the current month, as you and your friendly country are well known for your principles and for upholding norms and values based on the rich history, culture and civilization of China, with its ancient historical roots.

Furthermore, I should like to commend Mr. Alain Le Roy, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, and Ms. Susana Malcorra, Under-Secretary-General for Field Support, for their tireless and fruitful efforts since they assumed their posts. I wish both of them every success in establishing constructive and transparent working relations with Member States.

The crime of murdering the five Chinese citizens occurred in the context of several other considerations and actions and as a reaction to the momentum for peace that is being felt throughout the Sudan as a result of the launching of the Sudan People's Initiative. It was further proof of the anti-peace posture of that movement. But the Government of the Sudan remains the first to attend all forums and negotiations without any hesitation or conditions, regardless of time or place. It is the Government that has unilaterally and repeatedly renewed the ceasefire out of its conviction that there is no alternative to peace. Peace is the sole strategic option of the Government and the people of the Sudan in all their political diversity — hence, the Sudan People's Initiative to achieve a political

settlement to the Darfur crisis on the basis of an unprecedented national consensus regarding national objectives and their priority at this stage.

As all Council members are aware, the Sudan People's Initiative is neither an isolated effort nor parallel to regional and international efforts, but it rather supplements the efforts of Mr. Djibril Bassolé, African Union-United Nations Joint Chief Mediator for Darfur, and other efforts being made within the framework of the African-Arab initiative led by Qatar. In particular, peace will be built by the sons and daughters of the Sudan, and the international and regional communities should help the Sudanese people to attain that objective by supporting and enhancing their efforts. We therefore hope, now more than ever before, that those promising efforts will succeed within the national movement represented by the Sudan People's Initiative, which is being led by all Sudanese political parties, both the Government and the opposition.

I am pleased to inform the Council that the committees that were mandated to discuss and submit proposals on various aspects of the Darfur crisis have accomplished their task. They are: the committee on development and services; the committee on internally displaced persons, refugees and voluntary returns; the committee on peace and justice; the committee on reconciliation and social peace; the committee on foreign aspects; the committee on information; the committee on security; and the Committee on the choice of solutions.

Only yesterday, the Presidential Council began to consider the committees' proposals for submission to a general conference of the participants so that they can be adopted as an official document of the people of the Sudan that reflects their views and ideas and that constitutes a framework for producing a Sudanese resolution of the problems in Darfur. Perhaps the only absent factor will be the Security Council, which we expect to take positive measures vis-à-vis the leaders of the non-signatory movements to cause them to join the national consensus rather than relying on the military option to attain their objectives.

If the peace process is experiencing obvious momentum, the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) is also making reasonable progress, as stated in the report of the Secretary-General on the deployment of UNAMID (S/2008/659). Those who follow all developments related to the Operation's deployment will realize that the Government of the Sudan, having reaffirmed its commitment to resolution 1769 (2007), is backing up its words with deeds to honour that commitment. The Government was fully prepared to carry out its strategy to deploy 80 per cent of the Operation by the end of this year instead of the end of March 2009. The report, in its paragraphs 10 to 14, lists various reasons for delaying the attainment of that objective until the end of March 2009.

Those reasons are mere justifications, and are not the fault of the Government of the Sudan. The Government has been striving to remove all obstacles and has been building channels of communication, coordination and positive action with the United Nations and the African Union. The most recent example was the meeting of the tripartite mechanism — which includes the Government of the Sudan, the African Union and the United Nations — on 7 October in Khartoum, in which Under-Secretary-General Malcorra participated. As members can see from the report, the Government of the Sudan responded to all the concerns and requests made by the United Nations, which were addressed in the agreement signed at the end of the meeting. For example, the UNAMID Liaison Office at El Fasher, led by a senior officer, includes various State institutions and organs in Darfur in order to ensure the synergy necessary for all its procedures and processes. Other liaison offices have been established in the various sectors of the three states of Darfur.

The agreement also addressed all aspects of the use of airports, including travel authorizations, customs clearances, the best ways to use local and regional construction and transport capacities and the mobilization of resources. In this forum, I should like to reaffirm my country's full commitment to implement the agreement, which will be followed up during the forthcoming visit of Ms. Susanna Malcorra to the Sudan, on 16 November 2008.

The facts and events described in the report regarding security and humanitarian conditions clearly reflect the destructive acts and practices of sabotage, banditry and targeting of humanitarian workers carried out by armed groups and the incidents in which European tourists were kidnapped and cars were attacked. The politicization, militarization and arming of camps for internally displaced persons can easily been seen in the Kalma camp in Southern Darfur,

which has become a threat to UNAMID's operations from Nyala airport at a time when the Government of the Sudan, mindful of its responsibilities, is attempting to implement the humanitarian protocol it signed together with the United Nations through a high-level mechanism that includes the Government of the Sudan, the United Nations and the representatives of relevant humanitarian agencies and organizations.

It is also important that I refer to the fact that the agreement signed in the context of the last meeting of the Tripartite Mechanism also included several paragraphs on facilitating humanitarian operations, in particular to provide protection to humanitarian convoys. I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate that my country continues to be fully committed to facilitating humanitarian operations and to providing all the assistance necessary to achieve their objectives.

We appreciate the fact that the new report of the Secretary-General (S/2008/659) includes a full paragraph on the Sudan's efforts with regard to justice and accountability. Paragraph 65 of the report refers to the appointment of a Special Prosecutor, who is currently carrying out his duties in all the States of Darfur in total impartiality and with the high level of professionalism characteristic of the Sudan's judiciary. That neatly complements previous efforts to amend criminal procedures to establish special courts for the States of Darfur.

Paragraph 79 of the report states that

> "It is unclear what impact the 14 July application by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court for an arrest warrant against President Omar Al-Bashir will have on peace and security in Darfur and in the Sudan".

I do not think that anyone should underestimate the real threats that may emanate from that shameful procedure. Suffice it to say that most members of the international community — as represented by the African Union, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the League of Arab States and the African, Caribbean and Pacific States — have warned of the tragic consequences of that measure and the direct threat it poses to peace in the Sudan and the entire region.

With regard to relations between the Sudan and Chad, I am very pleased to inform the Council that the good offices being deployed to normalize and strengthen relations between our two fraternal countries are making good progress. We have already agreed to return ambassadors to the two capitals between 7 and 10 November 2008.

The Government of the Sudan once again calls on the United Nations to fulfil its obligations with regard to the full implementation of the heavy support package, which is the basis for the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur. Once that is complete, everything necessary for the Operation will be in place. We also call on the international community to provide for the remaining logistical needs of the mission, which have been talked about for a long time.

In conveying to the Council all the positive developments on all tracks, my country's Government hopes that the international community will support and strengthen those efforts in order to safeguard peace from the risks posed by sabotage and irresponsible undertakings and the harmful mixed messages being sent.

In conclusion, we appeal to the international community to work effectively and promptly with armed groups to convince them to lay down their arms and to respond positively to the calls for peace.

Mr. Khalilzad (United States of America): The representative of the Sudan mentioned the abduction of the Chinese workers. The United States condemns that abduction, which took place in South Kordofan state last week, as articulated in the 21 October press statement of the Department of State. The United States is aware of reports that five Chinese workers were killed during a rescue attempt in South Kordofan State. If those reports are confirmed, we would express our regret for those deaths, extend our sympathy to the victims' families and encourage the Government of the Sudan and the United Nations Mission in the Sudan to investigate that incident expeditiously, so that the perpetrators can be formally identified and brought to justice.

The United States reiterates its condemnation of all violence in the Sudan — violence by the Government and violence by the rebels. All parties must refrain from violence in favour of peace and dialogue. In that regard, the Government of the Sudan has a special responsibility. It must cease to engage in those areas of concern documented in the most recent

report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, including violating the limited arms embargo on Darfur, using aircraft painted to resemble United Nations humanitarian aircraft, conducting offensive overflights in Darfur, failing to implement the sanctions mandated by the Security Council and not accepting that there is no impunity for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of the subject.

The meeting rose at 3.50 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.6004

Security Council

Sixty-third year

Provisional

6004th meeting

Wednesday, 29 October 2008, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Zhang Yesui	(China)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Belle
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Tiendrébéogo
	Costa Rica	Mr. Weisleder
	Croatia	Mr. Vilović
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	Indonesia	Mr. Natalegawa
	Italy	Mr. Terzi di Sant'Agata
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Gouider
	Panama	Mr. Suescum
	Russian Federation	Mr. Rogachev
	South Africa	Mr. Laher
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Pierce
	United States of America	Mr. Khalilzad
	Viet Nam	Mr. Hoang Chi Trung

Agenda

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

Letter dated 8 October 2008 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1572 (2004) concerning Côte d'Ivoire addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2008/598)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

08-57470 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

Letter dated 8 October 2008 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1572 (2004) concerning Côte d'Ivoire addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2008/598)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Côte d'Ivoire, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. N'Gbichi (Côte d'Ivoire) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2008/672, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by France.

I wish to draw the attention of members to document S/2008/598, which contains the text of a letter dated 8 October 2008 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1572 (2004) concerning Côte d'Ivoire addressed to the President of the Security Council, transmitting the report of the Group of Experts on Côte d'Ivoire.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Belgium, Burkina Faso, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, France, Indonesia, Italy, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Panama, Russian Federation, South Africa, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Viet Nam

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1842 (2008).

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 10.15 a.m.